

The Starting of Three by mangagal

Series: [The Best Things Come in Threes \[1\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

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Summary:

After they had fought the monster Nancy knew that things couldn't go back to the way that they were before.

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

Basically how the three of them get together. I want to make this part of more stories that revolve around them after they are together but we'll see how that goes. The next chapters will be longer so please look forward to that! I hope you enjoy!

It had all started after they had defeated that horrible creature; well at least to the best of their abilities. Some might have said it started long before that and others might say that it didn't start until after that but Nancy knew when it really started and it started in the crash from the adrenaline and the relief of being young and alive. The three of them had wandered out of the front door of Jonathan's house guided by the flickering lights that somehow left behind a feeling of wonder instead of the fear they had conjured earlier, it was such a stark contrast knowing that Jonathan's mother and the police chief were making the lights move rather than the creature straight from everyone's worst nightmares.

They had stood on the porch for ages just watching the flickering lights get farther and farther away until they were out of sight. At that point the relief had finally washed over her and Nancy felt her knees buckle underneath her. She landed hard, startling the two boys that had been standing next to her. Both of them had immediately started fussing over her but before they could try to get her back on her feet she had grabbed them both by the hands and had dragged them down to sit with her. They had both been startled and unsure to start with, exchanging looks over her head uncertain of what was going on or why she was holding both of their hands, but she was quick to put an end to that. She knew that if she gave them too much time to think about it they would flip and she had not just fought a monster with them to have them go for each other's throats again. Nancy pulled them both closer to her until they were pressed up against her sides and she sighed contentedly at their solid warmth. Her boys shared another look over her head but she knew that they were fine with this and her intuition was confirmed when she felt

Steve shrug and then rest his head against her shoulder. Jonathan hesitated for a moment, as if he wasn't really sure that he was allowed to be included in this moment, but he gave in when she squeezed his hand. Then he relaxed into her like a puppet that had had its strings cut.

With Nancy in the middle it might have just confirmed what she already knew, that both boys were crazy about her. What the outside observer might not be able to see was how Steve had stretched his arm out to wrap around Nancy's shoulders. This may have appeared possessive but Nancy knew that his hand wasn't resting on her shoulder but had instead stretched farther and was cupping the back of Jonathan's neck. Jonathan had stiffened but hadn't made any move to pull away from the touch. They sat out on the front porch for ages even though it was terribly cold, their legs dangling off of the edge, and all three of them pressed together as tightly as they could possibly manage. They had all sat out there until they were wracked with shivers and had to relocate inside, not wanting to have survived the monster only to be finished off by a November chill.

Nancy had known from that point onward that they would be together, that this was the start of them, the two boy's might not know it yet but they would soon. There were just something's that you couldn't go through and not be changed by them and this past week had definitely been full of those sorts of things. They were irrevocably bonded together, at least by Nancy's calculations and math was something she was rarely wrong about.

2. Chapter 2

Summary for the Chapter:

It's time for Jonathan's point of view!

Notes for the Chapter:

This chapter is much longer than the first was and most of the future chapters will probably be about this long. I hope you enjoy it!

If you had asked Jonathan when it had all started he probably would have said around Christmas with the gift of the camera. He might not think that that was when it had started but he would say it was the beginning. He didn't see the start as that night on the porch as Nancy did, he had been too worried about the safety of Will and his mom to feel the subtle change between the three of them. He did, however, remember feeling safe and supported that night. With Nancy pulling her against him, her body warm despite the frigid temperature and solid in a way that felt real in a way that nothing had for a while. Steve's hand cupping the back of his neck, something that would have felt threatening and unwelcome even earlier that same day, was soothing and grounding, a solid warmth across the slender strip of exposed skin. That hour or so had been comforting but he hadn't recognized the feelings for what they truly were, the start of something new.

The gift of the camera is what had really gotten Jonathan on the right track of mind. Even though Nancy had said that the "not really a gift" was from her, he knew that it was from both of them or maybe it had been completely purchased by Steve. The camera that had been given to him was much more expensive than anything Nancy would have been able to afford on her own even with her cushy middle class upbringing since she didn't have a job but Steve seemed to have relatively unrestricted access to money as far as Jonathan could tell. Plus, for some reason this seemed like something that Steve would do, subtly try to make up for what he had done. In the past he would have thought that Steve would have been the exact opposite. That he would have loudly and brashly made big gestures

and would want the whole world to know but now Jonathan knew better. Steve may have a bigger than life persona but so much of that was an act put on for others. He was quick to get worked up and knew the best way to make someone upset but he was also quick to realize when he had done wrong and to try and make up for it. Steve was really a much quieter person at his core that had built up a persona that he felt he had to maintain because his inner core was soft and venerable. That he didn't want anyone to see it because they would hurt it.

Jonathan had figured some of it out himself but Nancy had revealed many of those secrets to him in the last month. Maybe she still felt like she needed to justify them being together to Jonathan or it seemed more like she wanted them to get along and understand each other. At first he had found it odd, she would stop by the hospital or their house to give Jonathan his homework or to collect what had been done to give back to his teachers. At first she would just stay to hand it off and check on how they were doing but soon she would stay and help him work through it, catching him up on important topics he had missed in class. Then she had started staying just to talk or to keep him company. That was when she had started revealing secrets about Steve.

It didn't make sense at first, they had been basically enemies and she had to know about his feelings for her. It seemed like she was giving him all sorts of information that he could have used to tear them apart or to destroy Steve. Then he had come to the realization that Nancy trusted him, she trusted him to take this information and to use it to understand Steve instead of using it to crush the fragile heart that was apparently hiding at the center. She never expressly told him that the camera had been Steve's idea but she had given him all of the information that he needed to know. She knew that he was smart enough to add it all together.

He had never actually been mad at Steve for breaking his camera, sure he had been upset but he couldn't really blame the guy. He had been a fucking creep and had gotten his camera broken for it, he knew he had been in the wrong and would accept his punishment. He had been upset because he knew that he would probably never get another camera. That one had already been a hand-me-down and

he had been saving as much as he could from his paychecks to be able to afford film and photo paper. There was no way in hell that he would ever be able to get together enough for a new camera, even if he managed to find a used one it would still be too expensive. His mom sure would not have been able to afford one and he sure as hell wasn't ever going to let her know that it was broken because then she would try and make it work in order to afford a new one. She worked more than hard enough as it was, he couldn't stand to see her work harder to make up for his mistakes. He hadn't really been upset with Steve; he had been upset with himself more than anything else.

Steve though, apparently he had felt badly about it. He had felt guilty for whatever reason and in his quite unassuming way had tried to fix it while not making himself available for any of the praise and in Jonathan's eyes that was simply unacceptable. He didn't really have any money to give them a real present, he had never had much money to begin with but what little he did have he had put into making sure that Will could have the best Christmas possible. School was closed so he couldn't develop any new photos for them. Even if it had been he didn't think he had anything that they would like plus he was way too embarrassed to really show his pictures to anyone, it was just something that he liked to do but he wasn't all that good at it despite what his mom said. He had decided he could make mix tapes for both of them. He knew that they might not be the style of music that they liked but he knew that they would both be polite enough to pretend to like them at least. They probably wouldn't even spend time together after they went back to school so he would be able to forget his embarrassment. He had worked harder on them than he would ever admit, even going so far as to make little collages from old magazines to cover the blank tape covers. He had caught himself giddily smiling about the gift more times than he could count and frankly he was embarrassed for himself, they where just cheep little gifts to thank them for everything, nothing more.

He had put them both in his coat pocket one day when he was going to go pick up Will. He figured he could at least give Nancy her gift and she would either know where Steve was or if he was lucky he could just give Steve's gift to Nancy and he wouldn't even have to give it to him in person. Jonathan was, however, not a lucky person and he should have known that to start with.

When he had shown up on the Wheeler's doorstep Mrs. Wheeler had answered and said the kids were just finishing up but they weren't quite done and that Nancy was upstairs so he could go hang out up there until Will was ready. So Jonathan had reluctantly wandered up to the second floor and knocked on Nancy's door. He was, however, not greeted by Nancy but instead by Steve Harrington. He hadn't planned for this scenario and almost bolted back down the stairs but then Steve was smiling at him and dragging him into the room and he'd missed his opportunity to escape. Nancy got up off the bed and gave him a quick hug. Jonathan glanced over at Steve, worried that they would be back at square one, but Steve had taken Nancy's spot on the bed reclining and grinning at the two of them.

"Jonathan, what are you doing here?" Nancy asked grinning like it really was a special treat instead of him awkwardly crashing their alone time.

"I was just coming by to pick Will up but the goobers aren't done yet so your mom said I should come wait up here." Jonathan awkwardly rubbed at the back of his neck feeling keenly out of place in Nancy's bedroom for the second time. "Uh, I actually also had a late Christmas present for you." Nancy's eyes lit up at that and she made impatient grabby hands towards him. This teased a half smile out of him and he tried to casually hand over the mix-tape.

"Wow thanks Jonathan!" She seemed genuinely excited about it and he let out a little sigh of relief that it had been well received. He chanced a glance over at Steve and he could have sworn his eyes were playing tricks on him but Steve looked a little disappointed, like he felt left out.

"Hey Steve." Jonathan called out, that was all of the warning he gave before tossing the other mix-tape to Steve who looked startled he almost dropped it. Steve's eyes lit up when he realized that he hadn't been left out of the gift giving. "Just a little thank you for the camera, it's really nice." Steve's eyes bugged out of his head and Jonathan had to stifle back the laughter that wanted to come bursting out at his expression.

"You promised you wouldn't tell!" He squealed looking at Nancy with disbelief, "I can't believe you gave me up!" And at that

Jonathan couldn't hold back his laughter any longer. It was the sort of big laughter that leaves you gasping for air and wiping tears off of your face, not his usual but he couldn't help it, the look on Steve's face had been so outrageous. They both stared at him in shock before Nancy also started laughing. Hers started out as little muffled giggles but soon transformed into full-blown laughter as well.

"Oh my god!" Nancy said gasping for breath, "Your face, oh my god!" Was all she got out before she was doubling over with laughter again. Steve was standing in the middle of the room looking perplexed and a little put out that they were both laughing at his expense.

"I don't see what's so funny." Steve said practically pouting.

"I didn't tell him Steve," Nancy said wiping a stray tear off her face, "he figured it out on his own. You were just so shocked that he figured it out, your face, it was just so funny!" Steve relaxed some now that he knew that his girlfriend hadn't given him up. The laughter slowly petered out until an amiable quiet descended on the room.

"No but really man, you didn't have to so thanks for the camera." Jonathan said smiling, not remembering why he had been so nervous to start with.

"It was no big deal," Steve said suddenly looking shy, "I kind of owed it to you. It was a pretty big jerk move the way I broke it so I just wanted to say sorry."

"You really don't need to," Jonathan said, remembering why he had been so nervous in the first place, "I did something fucked up, you don't need to apologies for what you did."

"Yeah but I went pretty overboard, that was pretty fucked up too." Steve scrubbed his foot along the carpet not making eye contact.

"No really it's fine I probably would have done the same thing if I was in your situation." He said awkwardly, "Um, I didn't actually see anything. I know it probably doesn't matter now but the

picture of Nancy without her shirt on was actually an accident. I took it before I realized what was happening, like I shouldn't have been taking pictures through the window anyway because it's creepy. But I just wanted you both to know that I um, didn't really see anything and I didn't mean to. So yeah, um, sorry about that." He knew that he was bright red by this point and he almost wished a monster would come bursting through the wall so he didn't have to talk about this anymore.

"Well its all water under the bridge now buddy." Steve said, snapping out of his embarrassed mood to jovially throw an arm around Jonathan's shoulder, "Next time you want to take pictures of us you can just ask and we'll let you join in." Steve seemed to realize how that sounded all of the sudden and he turned just as bright red as Jonathan was. He dropped his arm off of his shoulder and chuckled awkwardly. They both embarrassedly looked at the floor until they hear Nancy snort at them.

"Yeah Jonathan, next time bring your camera and take some good pictures of us." Nancy said still sniggering at how awkward the two of them where. The two of them shot a look at each other and it wasn't long until they where all laughing again. They were all red faced and gasping for breath when Mrs. Wheeler finally came up to get him, shooting all three of them odd looks for their red faces and shortness of breath.

"You seem happy." Will said peering at him as they drove home, "Did something good happen?"

"Nothing in particular buddy." Jonathan said still smiling as he reached over to blindly ruffle his little brother's hair.

"I'm glad," Will said after he finished straightening his mussed hair, "it's been a long time since I saw you this happy."

"Hey," he said glancing over at Will, "I'm fine you don't have to worry about me."

"Of course I do!" Will replied, "You're so busy worrying about everybody else you need somebody to worry about you!" He honestly didn't know what he'd done to deserve such an awesome

little brother. He couldn't help it as he reached out to ruffle Will's hair again despite his laughter and attempts to push away Jonathan's hand. Will was right, he really was happy for the first time in ages, at least since Will had returned if not longer. He really needed to stop worrying his little brother.

Notes for the Chapter:

Hope you're all enjoying it so far! I love these goobers so much. Kudos are always appreciated and I always love hearing from you lovelies so feel free to leave a comment!

3. Chapter 3

Summary for the Chapter:

Continuation of Jonathan's point of view on their developing feelings.

Jonathan had expected not to see Nancy or Steve very often once school started but to his surprise he found himself spending even more time with the two of them.

It would start in the morning at his locker where either Steve or Nancy or sometimes both of them would be waiting for him to chat about all sorts of unimportant things. At first he had been wary of it, thinking that they were teasing him or worse, were pitying him. When it continued day after day he finally relaxed about it and if pressed would have admitted to secretly enjoying it. They didn't stop there though. He was always seeing them between classes they didn't share or one or the other would pick them up from the classes they shared. Or on the rare occasion, somehow he would be talked into going to pick up the person who they didn't share a class with.

Then there was lunch. At first they had tried to convince him to come eat with them in the lunchroom but he had refused. He couldn't relax enough to eat when he could feel so many other people's eyes on him. They had finally given up on asking him to come eat with them. He sat in the photography classroom glumly eating his sandwich; he had no reason to feel down about it he told himself. He was the one who had pushed them away; of course they would eventually stop asking him. He took an almost vicious bite of his sandwich when he heard the door open and in popped Steve's head.

"Here he is!" He called brightly to someone over his shoulder, "I told you we should have checked here first!" Then he had sauntered into the room followed closely by Nancy who was grinning widely at him. From that day on they always came to him for lunch. He had asked Nancy if they wouldn't rather eat in the lunchroom with their other friends and she had waved him off with a little snort.

It seemed like they were always together after that. Like clockwork they would both be waiting for him by his locker after school, always asking him to do something or another. Usually he had to tell them no because he had to look after Will or he had work but then they would look so genuinely sad that he couldn't join them that he found himself making plans to meet up with them later. Somehow they always ended up at either Nancy's or Steve's house. Nancy and him would study together while Steve half-heartedly worked on his assignments. He liked to act like he was stupid but the reality was that he wasn't actually trying. He always got excellent grades on his English assignments and he even managed passing grades on his weaker subjects like science or math classes without even trying at all. If he actually applied himself Jonathan thought he might even be able to give Nancy a run for her money but he was content to coast along like he was. He would patiently watch them struggle for a couple of hours before he would finally grow bored and would do something to distract them from their work. They would pretend to be mad about it but really he always chose a time that he already knew that they needed a break.

On weekends they would often end up at Steve's giant empty house and they would watch movies or lay around and listen to music or anything else they wanted as loud as they wanted because no one was there to tell them to stop.

On warmer days they would sometimes even end up romping through the woods. Bundled up against the cold the three of them would go wandering, free from the fear this would have inspired in them months ago. Jonathan would take pictures and Steve and Nancy would make ridiculous faces when they caught him but plenty of times they didn't and Jonathan would get an excellent shot.

He found himself almost constantly with the two of them but even when he wasn't he found his mind dominated by their presence. He would be laying in bed or fixing breakfast or lunch or dinner or doing homework by himself for once and he would find his mind wandering. He'd suddenly find himself wondering about what they were doing right this moment or wishing they were there or even just missing them. Their togetherness had become something normal and he keenly felt their absence when they were not. If he could

always be with them he would but he knew that they were still a couple and they needed time away from him as a third wheel so he tried to give them that time. They, however, had apparently not gotten the memo and would invite him along to almost everything they would do and when he would try to refuse they would both give him the worst puppy eyes and then he just couldn't stand to say no. But when they were all together they would still do the things that couples do like hold hands or kiss and even a couple times had made out in his presence. He thought maybe he should feel jealous or embarrassed about it and sometimes it did but usually it just left him with a warm glow in his chest that must be some sort of sick voyeuristic pleasure.

At first he had blamed their overly affectionate behavior in front of him for them suddenly appearing in his dreams but after a while he had to accept that he had no one to blame for that but himself. He would have dreams where he and Nancy would be making out and eventually they would work their way down to less and less clothing and they would both be panting and moaning when Steve would show up and look at him in complete and utter disgust. He would call him a pervert and then pull Nancy to him and they would both laugh about how pathetic he was. Sometimes the dreams would be reversed and Jonathan would find himself almost naked in a bed with Steve before Nancy would come in and break it up. Sometimes he wouldn't be involved at all and it would just be Steve and Nancy together on the bed and he would just stand to the side watching them. Eventually they would turn to him and tell him to get out of there and then the dream would dissolve into mist. Lately in that dream they would turn to him and instead of pushing him away they would beckon for him to join them, those dreams were the best ones.

You might have thought that the dreams with Steve might have unnerved him but he had already gotten over his gay scare in middle school. He had had some disquieting dreams about various male classmates and celebrities. He had panicked at first. The way that Lonnie had mocked Will, calling him a queer and a fag had bounced around in his head causing him anxious days where anything he had eaten would threaten to make its way back up. Lonnie however was no good scum, Jonathan had decided. He wasn't

going to care what that man had to say about anything. He knew that his mom wouldn't mind no matter what. She loved both him and Will unconditionally and would never let something like that change her mind. After that he had decided that it was fine. He dreamed about girls about half the time anyway and found them hot so he could just end up with a girl and he never had to tell anyone about the dreams. But overall he had decided that whatever he was was not an issue while he remained here in Hawkins. He didn't even have any friends there so the probability of him dating anyone was next to zero. Anyway he was too busy looking after his little family to worry about those sorts of things.

The dreams with Steve had brought all of those feelings back and both of the dreams with Nancy and or Steve left him cleaning his sheets more frequently than he would prefer to be. He now had two friends but his chances of dating anyone was still firmly at zero. After all, his two friends were dating each other and he didn't want to lose either of them over something like this.

Notes for the Chapter:

Hope you've all enjoyed it so far! Next chapter will be from Steve's point of view so look forward to that. As always I love hearing from all you lovelies, so don't be shy and feel free to leave a comment! I hope you've all had a lovely Thanksgiving!

4. Chapter 4

Summary for the Chapter:

Steve's point of view!

Notes for the Chapter:

Okay so Steve has some major internalized-homophobia and he's working on it so there is some homophobic and possibly upsetting language in this chapter so be prepared.

If you had asked Steve when it had all started he probably would have pretended that he had no idea what you where talking about but in his heart of hearts he knew it had started the exact moment they had all sat on the porch together. He had tried to explain it away. He had even gone to books to see if they had an answer, they did. So Steve had told himself that it was the suspension bridge effect and that was all he was feeling and soon it would fade away back to normal possibly friendship feelings. That might be what he told himself but he wasn't fooling anyone, especially himself. He had known that things would be different the moment they had all sank down on the porch. He had gone to just wrap his arm around Nancy (his beautiful, brave, and smart girlfriend) and he had found himself reaching farther until his hand was around the back of Jonathan's neck. When Jonathan had flinched it had made Steve rethink everything he had done ever, but then he had relaxed instead of pulling away. In that moment Steve had known that this felt right all of them there together, safe and warm.

Of course that night in his own cold and lonely bed he had completely freaked. What the hell had he been thinking? The three of them together? That was the most ridiculous thing his mind could have ever come up with! What kind of depraved creature was he that he wasn't completely and totally satisfied with the love of his life Nancy Wheeler? It wasn't even like he was bored or tired of her (seriously who could ever get tired of her?) it was like he just wanted to add someone else on, how bizarre was that? Even if he did want to add another person he should want to add another girl not another

guy! After all he wasn't a queer! He loved Nancy and had a long string of other girls before her, so that proved that he wasn't a fag! But even if he was thinking of a guy it made no sense for it to be Jonathan Byers of all people! He had made fun of the guy both to his face and behind his back and had been pummeled by him; there was absolutely no reason for him to have any sort of positive feelings for him. He wasn't a queer and he just had to focus on other things until these strange wrong feelings went away.

So he spent a lot of time at Nancy's. If there's one thing that should help you forget about the crush you didn't have on some guy in addition to your girlfriend it should be spending time with said girlfriend. However, apparently Nancy hadn't gotten the memo of help Steve not think about Jonathan and instead focus on your hot girlfriend. She kept bringing him up in little ways like giving Steve updates about how he and his family were doing or cutting their hang out short to go see Jonathan. He felt like past him would have been jealous and angry about the amount of time that the two of them were spending together but he didn't, at least not in the same way he would have. He was still jealous but not at the thought that Nancy would be unfaithful or that Jonathan would try to steal her away. Instead he felt jealous that the two of them were spending time together and he wasn't with them. Nancy had suggested several times that he should join them but Steve had declined, after all, he had kind of been a grade-a asshole. He had to at least try to apologize to Jonathan, not like that night that he had showed up at his door and accidentally fought a monster with him instead. He had to do something that could at least start to make up for what he had done, maybe if he did that he could feel like he could actually hang out with both of them like he wanted to.

So in the middle of December he had taken Nancy aside and told her his master plan. She had loved it but she thought that he should be the one to give it to Jonathan. He wasn't completely sure why but he knew that he couldn't be the one to give him the gift. It felt kind of like bragging if he just gave it to him, it seemed like the kind of thing his dad would do to try and buy his way back into someone's good graces. Steve didn't want to be like him, he just wanted to do his best to fix what he'd broken. Nancy had finally agreed to his plan, even though she still thought he should tell

Jonathan that it was from him, but she promised not to tell. They had driven to the city one weekend and they had spent the whole day hunting down a camera that was just right for Jonathan. He was so giddy after it; he could hardly wait for Nancy to give the camera to him.

After all of the shenanigans with the camera and Jonathan's return gift of the mix-tapes, the warm feeling in his chest had only grown bigger and brighter. He had convinced himself by then that these were friendship feelings. After all, he had been lonely since he had broken it off with his old friends, even if they had been jerks. As wonderful as it was to be with Nancy he must still need some friends. These feelings that he was having were just the feelings of having a friend that was actually nice and not a complete idiot, yep, these were completely and totally friendship feelings.

At first when they had gone back to school it had been Nancy's idea for them to seek Jonathan out but soon he had joined in on the planning. He had been the one to suggest that they go to Jonathan for lunch instead of trying to make him come to the lunchroom. He had felt all warm inside when he realized he had read the signs correctly. Jonathan had grinned at them joining him for lunch instead of shooing them away like Steve had feared. And when his chest had gone all warm and fuzzy at the sight of Nancy and Jonathan's heads close together as they studied together, or the way Nancy's nose would scrunch up adorably when she was concentrating extra hard, or when Jonathan's face would light up when he saw Steve waiting for him by his locker, those were all friendly feelings. They couldn't be anything besides that.

Notes for the Chapter:

I completed NaNoWriMo but I still haven't finished on my novel so I will still be mostly working on that and writing this as a treat to myself. I hope all of you lovelies are enjoying this! I would love to hear from you so feel free to leave a comment and/or kudos! Hope you're all doing great!

5. Chapter 5

Summary for the Chapter:

Steve's point of view again.

Notes for the Chapter:

Warning for this chapter with non graphic sex dream and vomiting. It doesn't really go to in depth with either but if you're sensitive about these kinds of things be careful.

Well he was able to convince himself that it was just friendship for a while. At least he was up until the dream. It had started out like many of his dreams did, Nancy and him kissing on his bed languid and sweet before they had turned more urgent. Then he would usually push her back onto the bed, slowly remove her clothes and then sweetly lavish her body with attention or they would rip each other's clothes off and go at it fast and passionately.

This night however, the dream went a little differently than it usually did. It started out like usual, the kissing and the touching, but when it came to the part where he would usually push Nancy on to the bed he found himself pushed to the bed instead. Well he could work with that, but when he looked up, expecting to see his gorgeous girlfriend, instead he saw Jonathan Byers pinning him to the bed. His shaggy hair hung in his face casting shadows but his eyes were alight and he had a salacious grin stretched across his face. His large hands firmly pressing into Steve's chest as Jonathan straddled his body. Steve looked around wildly for Nancy, panicking for a moment. Until he saw her lounging on the bed next to him, naked as the day she was born and looking just as pleased with the situation as dream Jonathan was.

"There's no need to panic babe," Nancy leaned over, kissing his face, "this is what you wanted after all." She kissed him hard on the mouth. He blinked and then they were all freed of their clothes. He wanted to feel disgusted, he wanted to feel turned off and weird and not interested in this at all but he didn't. He felt so turned on and

this all felt so right and when they both went down on him he thought that he would die a happy man right then and there.

Steve woke with a start, his dick was rock hard. He had to sprint to the bathroom to throw up. He retched into the toilet over and over again until nothing was coming up but bile. Steve rested his head against the cool porcelain as he struggled to calm down. How could he have had a dream like that? He wasn't a fag, he couldn't be, he just couldn't! He loved Nancy! Wasn't that prof that he wasn't like that? But in the dream he had felt so good, so alive, and freer than he had ever felt in his life! It was wrong though! His dad would kill him if he ever found out!

At that thought his stomach had revolted against him and he had been sick all over again. He couldn't stop his mind from going around in panicked circles over and over again, stuck in a loop of doubt and self-loathing and panic. He was stuck in a loop and he needed help to get out of it. He didn't really stop to think about it, just grabbed his car keys and headed out slamming the door behind him not bothering to be quiet since he knew there was no one there to accidentally wake up. He speed over to Nancy's house, focusing only on getting there not letting his thoughts dwell on what had happened because if he did he knew he wouldn't be able to make it there.

He pulled in down the street and snuck up over the garage to knock on her window. He use to just let himself in but now that he knew she slept with that shotgun under her pillow he didn't want to startle her and get shot. At first it didn't seem like she was going to wake up and Steve had no idea what to do with himself if she didn't but then she had finally stirred. He redoubled his efforts so she wouldn't just roll over and go back to sleep. Finally she seemed to wake up and her eyes bugged out when she saw him out there perched outside of her window. She jumped out of bed and threw open the window before he could start knocking again.

"Steve! Do you have any idea what time it is?" She hissed but let him into her room; "My parents will kill me if they find you in here!"

"Sorry Nance," he said nervously toeing off his shoes and

climbing into the warm spot that she had left behind in the bed, “before I knew it I was already here sorry.”

“Steve what’s wrong?” She asked climbing into bed with him and gently holding his face between her hands to stare into his eyes. He wanted to tear his face away from those gentle hands but he resisted the urge, this is what he had come here for after all.

“Well I had this dream...” He started but his voice petered off, he wasn’t sure that he could do this.

“What? Was it a nightmare?” She asked so sweetly, laying down next to him so that they were face to face, she took his hands in hers, “It’s okay you know. I still have nightmares about everything that happened.”

“Um, no it wasn’t that.” Steve chuckled nervously, all of the sudden he really really did not want to do this but there was no escape route now.

“Steve,” Nancy said sternly, propping herself up on her elbow so that she could look down at him for full effect, “did you have a sex dream? Is this a booty call at three A.M. on a school night? Because if that’s what this is then I am going to push you out of the window and lock you out from now on.”

“No way! It’s not that!” He frantically said earning a harsh shush from Nancy, “Well it’s not exactly like that, I mean it was a sex dream but I’m not crawling into your bed to get some.” He was mortified to hear his voice waver at the end of his sentence.

“Babe what’s wrong?” She asked lying back down and softly stroking the side of his face.

“Well it started out as the normal dream,” he started out, Nancy rolled her eyes at that, he had told her in detail about his usual dream about the two of them, “but it was different this time.” His voice was stuck in his throat, god he couldn’t do this! Why had he been so convinced that this was what he should do? He should have dealt with it by himself. He should have squashed down the dream and never ever have told anyone about it.

“What was different this time?” She was being so patient with him, she was so good to him it made him want to cry. “Come on Steve, just talk to me baby. I promise I won’t be mad no matter what. Whatever it is it’ll be fine.” He took a deep breath and hid his face in her stomach where he wouldn’t have to look at her when her expression turned into one of disgust.

“Um, you weren't the only one in the dream this time.” His voice sounded awfully thick to his ears, like he was about to burst into tears. He expected her to get angry at that or at least pull away from him but she did none of those things. She just pulled him closer and stroked his hair. When he didn’t resume telling her about the dream she gently prompted him.

“Who else was there Steve?” She asked in the quiet. Here in the dark and the quiet with Nancy he felt much safer than he had alone in his empty house, maybe he hadn’t been wrong in coming here. Maybe Nancy really would know what to do.

“Jonathan was there too.” His voice sounded so quiet and small that he wouldn’t have even recognized that it was his if he hadn’t just said those words.

“Really?” Her voice didn’t sound disgusted or hurt by what he’d just said; in fact it sounded rather pleased about it. “The both of us were there in your dream?”

“Yeah it was both of you.” Steve kept waiting for the other shoe to drop. For her to push him out of the bed and to scream at him and be disgusted by him. He didn’t know what to think of this excited sounding acceptance of what he was telling her.

“That’s great then!” Nancy jerked back into a sitting position, dislodging Steve from her stomach in her excitement. “This will all work out then!” Nancy babbled excitedly still keeping her voice down. Her face fell however when she saw the expression on his face.

“What do you mean by it’s great? Nothing about it is great!” His voice sounded thin and whiny, the kind of voice he knew he made before he was about to lose it.

“Baby what’s wrong? What has you so worked up about this whole thing?” She asked looking concerned again.

“How can you even ask that? Everything is wrong with it! It shouldn’t be that way! It’s gross and wrong and awful!” He knew he was being a little loud but he couldn’t help it.

“What part of it is wrong?” She asked gently, stroking his hair again. “Is it because there where three people?” Steve shook his head; it wasn’t really a problem as long as everyone was okay with it. It wasn’t really conventional but it wasn’t wrong per say. He didn’t have a problem with that as long as Nancy didn’t either. Nancy bit at her lip before she asked the next question, “Is it wrong because the other person was Jonathan?” She seemed afraid of what the answer could be but what else could she think the problem was. When he nodded he could feel her flinch at that. “I thought you liked him?”

“I do like him!” Steve defended his answer, he did like him way too much apparently, “It’s not a problem with him. He’s fine; he’s great it’s just that it’s not suppose to be like this. It’s wrong.” The last words were whispered, a struggle to get them to come out at all. He couldn’t believe that he had to explain something that she should so clearly know. That it was impossible, wrong, and disgusting. She should know this, he had known it since he was seven after all and Nancy was smart so she should understand this! Nancy cocked her head to the side peering at him like his aunts spaniels did whenever he showed up, confused but trying to figure him out.

“So it’s not specifically because it’s Jonathan.” Steve nodded even though it was obviously not really a question, “So it’s because it’s another guy that it’s wrong? Why’s that?” Nancy asked like she really didn’t understand it. He wanted to tear his hair out in frustration, this was simple, he shouldn’t have to explain this to her!

“It’s, it’s just wrong!” He stuttered over the words trying to find something to get it across to her, “It’s not allowed!”

“Alright,” Nancy said slowly like she was talking to an easily startled animal, “so if it was allowed you would be okay with it?”

“Well yeah, but that’s not the point!” What was she even

getting at? “It doesn’t matter what if because it isn’t. It’s wrong and gross and-and-and it’s just not allowed! Okay Nancy? It’s not and it’s never going to be!” He was getting worked up again, his chest was heaving and he felt hot. Maybe he was actually just coming down with the flu and that had just been a fever dream.

“Who says that it’s wrong?” Nancy asked soothingly, stroking his hair again trying to get him to calm down.

“Everyone does!” He said louder than he should have but Nancy just kept stroking his hair waiting for him to really answer the question. Steve let out a sigh before replying in a tiny voice, “My dad.”

“And why does he say it’s wrong?” She asked.

“He says that they’re an abomination, that they’re all going to burn in hell.”

“Does your dad even believe in god?” Nancy asked incredulously, Steve couldn’t help but snort at her tone.

“Hell no,” Steve said, “and he’s one to talk. He would be first in line with the number of times he’s cheated on mom.”

“See?” She said smiling, “Why do you believe your dad about this when he’s so obviously full of shit?”

“I don’t know Nance,” Steve let out a long-suffering sigh, “like I know he’s a grade A piece of shit but you know, like he’s still my dad. What he thinks still matters to me.”

“Okay, I get that,” Nancy said, “but he’s not here right now Steve. And he never has to know about any of this, I’m not going to tell him and there’s no one else here to tell. So tell me how you really felt about the dream.”

“I really liked it.” Steve groaned out muffled behind his hands, “I really liked it and both of you where stupid hot and it was nice.” She looked way too pleased about it. “And then I woke up and I threw up at least 7 times.” He almost felt bad for making her face look like that but she’s the one who wanted him to be honest.

“Aw, babe I’m sorry,” she held him close, “is there anything that I can do to help?”

“I don’t know,” he turned his head into her neck, “this is kind of helping, just being able to talk it is helping.”

“Okay,” Nancy agreed, “but Steve, you know it’s not gross right? It’s fine if you feel that way, there’s nothing wrong or gross about it.” Steve grumbled about it for a while but eventually he nodded.

“I know.” They just laid there for a while wrapped around one another before Steve spoke up again. “You know what Nancy?” She mumbled some kind of response; clearly falling back to sleep soon, “I think I really like him.”

“Jonathan?” She asked sounding a little more awake.

“Yeah.”

“Oh, okay.” She opened one eye to look at him, “Cool.”

“So that’s okay?” He asked worriedly, “You’re not grossed out or anything?”

“No way!” Nancy said shaking her head, “I was kind of hopping you did.”

“Why?” Steve asked, honestly kind of confused by her actions all night.

“Well because I like him to and it would be kind of awkward if you didn’t.” She said in a matter of fact tone, “We should tell him!”

“What? No way!” He sputtered, “He’s going to hate me! There’s no way that I can ever let him know! Are you crazy?” She ignored his last question rolling her eyes.

“He’s not going to hate you Steve,” Nancy soothed, “I’m pretty sure his little brother is gay so he’s definitely not going to hate you for liking him.”

“There is a world of difference between being okay with your little brother who almost died being gay and some creepy guy who said he was your friend having sex dreams about you.”

“Steve you’re not creepy,” Nancy qualified, “well you’re not creepy about this, it’s kind of creepy how you always show up at my house whenever my mom makes meatloaf. Like you show up even when I don’t even know that we’re having it! That’s not natural.”

“It’s a gift.” He said with a smug smile wiggling his eyebrows. Nancy smacked him with a pillow.

“Okay but he’s not going to think it’s creepy.” She said rolling over so she was lying on top of him, “In fact I’m almost one hundred percent sure that he likes you too.”

“No way!” He probably would have jerked upright if Nancy hadn’t decided to use him as a pillow, “That is completely impossible.”

“You’ll never know if we don’t ask him.” She said laying her head down over his heart. She was probably able to hear the frantic thumping as it tried to escape his chest.

“I can’t Nancy!” He hissed out, he could practically feel the frustration rolling off of her.

“Why not Steve?” She hadn’t moved her head from off of his chest but he could feel her pouting, “We both like him and I know he likes us back so why can’t we just talk to him?”

“We will,” he said quietly and he could feel her perk up, “but not yet. Like it would be really nice Nance but, honestly? I just puked from having a dream that we where together, how am I going to react if it’s a reality? So we can work on it but we need to take it slow like really really slow.”

“Okay, fine.” She did see his point; “We’ll take it slow.” She stretched up and placed a kiss on his lips, “And now I think it’s time for you to go home, people are going to start getting up soon and I want to sleep a little bit more before my mom comes breaking down

my door.” He didn’t really want to leave but she was right so they carefully untangled themselves and he climbed half way out the window before turning back around to steal another kiss from Nancy. “See you at school?” She asked hopefully.

“I think I’m going to call in sick.” He said feeling badly about it but he really didn’t think he could do school tomorrow or more like later today.

“Okay,” she nodded seeming surprisingly fine with it, “feel better then and I’ll call later?”

“Sure,” he leaned in for another kiss, “I really love you. You know that right Nancy?”

“Yeah I know it. Love you too you goober.” She said kissing him back, “Now hurry up and climb down before you fall out of my window and break your neck!”

Notes for the Chapter:

I have no idea why it looks so short when I post it.
It's 11 pages long in the word document :/
I hope all of you lovelies are enjoying this and that
you're having a good week! I love hearing from you
so please leave comments!

6. Chapter 6

Summary for the Chapter:

Poor Steve got himself all worked up and made himself sick.

Notes for the Chapter:

So Steve got too worked up about his thoughts and made himself sick. It's like those people who always get sick before important events, they get too worked up and then their body just can't fight off any illness. Okay, I know that Joyce works at some sort of home goods type store and not the grocery store but I forgot that when I was writing and I liked this idea so we're just going to pretend that she got a job with more regular hours at the grocery store after the whole mess with Will. Again a warning for vague mention of vomit, nothing descriptive besides saying that it happens. Enjoy!

Jonathan slammed the door of his locker shut harder than was strictly necessary but he didn't jump at that. Instead he nearly jumped out of his skin when Nancy told him that he'd closed his locker too vigorously. It's not like he never saw Nancy in the mornings it was just usually Steve who was waiting there and if Nancy was there she was there with Steve. Plus he usually wasn't hiding behind the door of Jonathan's locker to jump out at him when he wasn't gentle enough with it, only partially because he was too tall to hide effectively. In fact he was so use to the other teen greeting him first thing in the morning that he looked around like Steve might be hiding somewhere behind Nancy which he was definitely too tall to do.

"Where's Steve?" He asked shoving his books into his backpack as they started their way down the hallway.

"I haven't seen him yet." Nancy looked like she was concerned but also like she knew more than she was telling him,

“Maybe he’s just running late today.”

“Yeah, maybe.” He shrugged, waving goodbye to Nancy as they went down separate hallways for their first class. He had already felt off this morning, his alarm had gone off late and he had almost made everyone else late, but Steve not being there just threw him more off kilter. It was weird how quickly he had gotten use to this new normal where when the new routine wasn’t followed it completely threw off his day. All throughout class he wondered what he was supposed to do, Steve was usually the one to orchestrate who went to get the others when class was done. Was Jonathan supposed to go get Nancy and walk her to class? Or was she going to come get him? Or was he supposed to walk her to her class this morning? Or where they supposed to go to all of their classes by themselves? He had never really thought about this before, it had always just happened. He was still worrying about it when he left history and was headed off to his next class. Luckily Nancy seemed to have picked up where Steve left off and was waiting for him part way to his next class. She casually bumped into him with her shoulder, subtly telling him to relax. It was kind of scary sometimes when she would read him like this. He guessed it had something to do with spending so much time with someone else since he had started to pick up on little signals like that from them as well, like how right now he could tell that Nancy was hiding something. He decided not to worry about it; if it was something important she would tell him. With that he was saying goodbye to Nancy at her classroom door and continuing down the hall to his own class.

It continued like that until it was lunchtime. It was still just the two of them. Jonathan could hardly believe how it had changed from him eating in here all by himself to being with two other people so constantly that it threw everything off when one of them was missing. They ate in silence for a while before Nancy brought it up.

“Steve hasn’t showed up yet,” she said it kind of like a question even though she obviously knew the answer, he grunted noncommittally around his pb&j, “so I figured that he’s probably sick.”

“Or he’s playing hooky.” Jonathan interjected.

“Or playing hooky,” Nancy added his suggestion, “either way he’s going to have lots of work that he missed. I was thinking of taking it to him, do you want to come?”

“Um, sure,” Jonathan didn’t really know what to say, “but isn’t it kind of weird for me to just show up if he’s sick? Isn’t that the kind of thing where you’d just want your girlfriend there and not someone else awkwardly hovering?” Nancy made a little dismissive sound at that, waving her hand at the idea.

“He’s probably playing hooky like you said,” she took a delicate bite of her apple before continuing, “anyway, we can always just use the excuse of me needing a ride up there since I don’t have a car and you do.”

“Oh I see how it is,” he said fake pouting, “you’re only using me for my car.” They both grinned for a moment before Jonathan turned serious again, “But seriously Nancy, are you sure he won’t mind me just showing up at his house?”

“Of course he wouldn’t,” she placed her hand over his, squeezing gently, “we both really like you.” Jonathan still wasn’t quite use to these little touches that Nancy and Steve would dole out all of the time, but he had started to relax into them. Since nether of them got upset with the other for initiating it, it had to just be normal friend touching and nothing to get worked up about.

So that was how he ended up agreeing to go deliver Steve his missed handouts after school. They had decided to meet up at his car after school and he would drive them over. He was lucky actually; Will was going straight to Mike’s house after school so he didn’t need to be home to watch him and he wasn’t scheduled to go into work, so if Steve had to pick a day to be sick this was really ideal. Or playing hooky he guessed, that would actually be preferable. Then they could give him a hard time for not asking them if they wanted to, even though every one knew they would have both said no, and then they would watch a movie or something. Yeah, that was definitely the better option.

After school Jonathan stood awkwardly on the Harrington’s front porch shifting nervously from foot to foot. Big houses like this

always made him feel nervous like he didn't belong. Nancy's face had taken on a worried little pinched look as she pressed on the doorbell for the second time. She was about to lay into it for the third time when they heard a muffled thump from inside followed by some quiet cursing. The two of them shared a worried look over the ominous thump. Then the door started rattling like Steve was having a hard time getting the door unlocked for them. The door finally burst open after his struggle against the lock.

"Nancy?" Steve seemed confused by her presence on his front porch, "What are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be at school?" He looked blearily around; squinting like that would make more sense. "Jonathan? You shouldn't skip school either."

"Um, Steve, schools already done," Nancy shared a worried look with Jonathan, "we were coming by to give you the work you missed."

"Oh." He seemed to be having a hard time processing what she'd told him. He looked awful. His skin was fever flushed and there was a faint sheen of sweat. He had on old holey sweats that Jonathan didn't even know he owned, he always looked so put together. His usually carefully styled hair lay flat and limp on his forehead, stuck there with sweat. "Well I guess you two should come in?" But he seemed unsure about it himself. He took one step before stumbling and almost falling to the floor. Both of them reached out a hand to steady him. He tried to shake them off but he was too weak to do so and only convinced them that he needed more help. Jonathan slipped his arm around Steve to keep him upright while Nancy came around in front of him to peer at his face. She lifted a hand up to see if he had a fever and almost jerked her hand back at how hot he was.

"Jesus Steve!" She hissed at how high his temperature was.

"It's not that bad," Steve slurred, his head lolling over onto Jonathan's shoulder, "you guys can go home I'm fine." At that he tried to take a couple steps only to have his knees buckle and he would have fallen if Jonathan hadn't been there to catch him. Jonathan and Nancy shared another worried look over his head.

"Yeah, that's not happening buddy," Jonathan said getting a

better grip on his friend, "let's get you back to bed." He started dragging him up the stairs as Nancy hovered anxiously since she couldn't really do anything to help besides closing the front door and turning lights on and off as they went.

"I don't want to go back to bed," Steve whined when they were about half way up the stairs, "it's lonely up there." Jonathan frowned at that. He had a feeling that Steve was alone most of the time and most of the time he tried to hide how lonely he was. It was sad to see him like this, broken down and sick. Upset about being alone but no one being there to take care of him.

"Don't worry," Nancy said patting his shoulder, "we're not going to let you be lonely."

"But Nancy!" He said somewhat frantically, "You have to go to school and get good grades! How am I supposed to be your trophy husband if you fail out of school?" Both of them couldn't suppress their laughter at Steve's apparently very valid concern.

"Don't worry babe," Nancy said soothingly, holding in her laughter at his pouting face, "school is already done today so we're still on track for me to support my future trophy husband." He seemed satisfied by that answer and leaned more heavily into Jonathan's shoulder, turning his face into the bare skin of his neck sending a shiver down Jonathan's spine at the little puffs of breath against it.

"I don't feel so good." He groaned out.

"It's okay," Jonathan said, trying to be as soothing as possible, "just a little bit farther and you can lay down again." Steve nodded pathetically into his neck and did his best to help move himself towards his bedroom. They finally got him settled in bed and under a comforter as Jonathan's mind raced through everything they should do. He'd only ever taken care of his own little brother but he obviously had the most experience of taking care of other people out of the three of them. Nancy's mom had probably always taken care of everyone and it seemed like Steve had always been left alone to fend for himself and didn't even know what he should be doing for himself. He ran his hand across Steve's forehead to try and get a more

accurate gauge on how high his fever was and stroked back his sweaty hair so it was off his face. Steve leaned into the cool touch, it should have been embarrassing to do this but he decided that he needed to be responsible and didn't have time for that. He stood up and went to leave the room to look for supplies around the house and maybe do a run to the store to get anything that they didn't have. But when he tried to leave Steve's hand shot out and held on tight to the hem of his sweater.

"You said you weren't going to leave me here." Steve said pitifully refusing to let go.

"I'm just going to go get a couple things then I'll be right back. Nancy will be here until I get back." Jonathan said carefully trying to untangle Steve's fingers from his sweater but somehow just ended up holding his hand instead.

"Don't leave me here by myself!" He pleaded, his eyes wide and too bright from the fever. Jonathan sighed inwardly before sitting back down on the edge of the bed.

"Okay, it's fine. I'll stay." He said rubbing soothingly circles with his thumb onto Steve's hand. The tension went out of his forehead and he relaxed back against the pillows. Jonathan looked over at Nancy, thinking she might find this behavior and their hand holding weird but she just looked worried and stressed out without a clear direction, anxious without being able to help. "Nancy," he said sending her off to do what he had been planning on, "I need you to see if you can find a thermometer and some medicine for this fever, if you find that can you bring it back first with a damp washcloth. Then can you go check the kitchen to see what kind of food there is and if you can find any sports drinks or ginger ale?" Nancy nodded before heading off to look.

"There's not any medicine," Steve mumbled from his spot on the pillows, "my mom doesn't let us keep any." Jonathan thought that that was kind of weird but decided not to press any farther today when he might say something he didn't want to really tell him.

"Okay that's fine," he didn't want him to work himself up to much, "do you know if you have any allergies?"

“Yeah pineapple.” Steve said vaguely.

“Okay, good to know but I meant do you have any allergies to any medicine?” Jonathan asked not wanting to have to take him to the hospital because they accidentally sent him into allergic shock.

“I don’t think so,” he said furrowing his brow, “but I’m sensitive to medicine so I’m not suppose to take the full dose?” He asked like he wasn’t sure if that was the right answer or not.

“Okay, good.” Jonathan went through his mental checklist, “Have you eaten anything today?”

“Yeah,” Steve mumbled groggily obviously starting to fall back to sleep, “but I threw it all back up.” Okay, so they needed to make sure he didn’t get anymore dehydrated than he already was and hopefully make something that he would be able to keep down. His mind was going a million miles a minute when he noticed Steve poking him, trying to get his attention.

“Sorry, what was it?” He asked, Steve was looking a little bit better like maybe his fever had broken but he was still clinging tightly to his hand so Jonathan couldn’t be sure.

“You don’t actually have to stay, I’ll be fine.” He said propping himself up a little bit with his pillow. It wasn’t very convincing with the way he was still clinging to Jonathan’s hand.

“Steve, you clearly aren’t fine,” Jonathan said exasperatedly, “you would have fallen down the stairs without us here.”

“Well yeah but,” his cheeks where flushed and Jonathan couldn’t tell if it was from embarrassment or his fever, “it’s fine this always happens.”

“What do you mean this always happens?” Jonathan asked.

“I get sick like this a couple times a year,” he shrugged from his reclined position, “I’m sick for a few days, I puke a lot, and lose a couple pounds but it’s fine. I’ve always handled it by myself.”

“Yeah but you don’t have to handle it by yourself!” Jonathan

exclaimed, "We're here for you and we're going to take care of you! And it doesn't matter that you've done this before! You shouldn't have to, you're still a kid and people should be looking out for you!"

"Hey! I'm almost an adult." Steve replied churlishly.

"Nope," Jonathan sassed back, "you're still a kid who needs looking after." Steve sighed but accepted it and slumped back into his pillows. He startled for a moment when Jonathan brushed his hair back from his face but then leaned into the cool touch. Nancy came back with the thermometer, which got popped, into Steve's mouth, and a wet washcloth, which Jonathan spread over Steve's forehead. He grumbled that it was too cold which Jonathan ignored. "Keep your mouth closed or we'll get a bad reading on your temperature." He snapped at Steve after he kept trying to chat with the thermometer in his mouth.

"There's not really anything in the house," she said unsure, shooting a glance over at Steve as if worried about how he was able to survive from day to day and not just when he was sick, "I could ask my mom to bring something over but then she would know how often Steve's here by himself and I'm pretty sure she wouldn't let me come over anymore." She sounded like she would risk it but she didn't have to.

"It's okay," Jonathan said taking the thermometer out of Steve's mouth, "I'll go do a grocery run and I'll make something." They both seemed unduly surprised by the fact that he could cook but he hadn't exactly broadcast the fact so what could he expect. "What the fuck," he said, shocked at the thermometers reading, "how do you have a fever of 102 degrees!" Steve shrugged like he thought that Jonathan actually expected for him to account for his fever. Jonathan gathered up his stuff to leave.

"What are you doing?" Steve asked seeming distressed again even though he had been the one who had told them they should leave.

"I'm going to go get some groceries so you don't die," he said shoving his arms into his coat, "and Nancy is going to stay here with you until I get back."

“Wait,” Nancy called out as he went to leave, “do you have money for it? I have a little you can take but will it be enough?” Jonathan had to admit that he hadn’t really been thinking about it, he’d been too busy worrying. He did have some money, he had been able to keep some more of it since they had gotten that settlement from the electrical company, but he wasn’t sure he had enough to cover everything. He bit his lip trying to figure out how to budget the money he had when Steve propped himself up and pointed to the desk.

“I have grocery money that you can use,” Steve said pointing to an envelope labeled ‘food money’, “I haven’t spent much so there should be enough for whatever.” Jonathan scooped up the envelope, doing his best to not look shocked when he saw how much money was in there.

“Alright I’m off,” Jonathan called out, “Nancy’s in charge while I’m gone. Stay in bed and don’t cause her any trouble!” Jonathan could practically feel Steve pouting at his words but he was focused on leaving and getting back as fast as possible before disaster could strike. He rationally knew that he couldn’t fend off disaster with merely his presence but he had felt that way ever since Will had gotten taken, that if he was there then nothing too bad could happen to those that he cared about. It was stupid but he couldn’t help it.

He ran as many stop signs and lights as he thought he could without getting pulled over and his foot was maybe a little bit heavy on the gas but he made it to the grocery store in one piece and more importantly in record time. He grabbed a cart and rushed through the aisles as quickly as he could without forgetting anything important. He grabbed some chicken and assorted vegetables and hoped that the Harrington’s actually had a soup pot big enough for this. Ginger ale and some of those electrolyte drinks made for little kids also made their way into the cart along with some noodles and a package of saltines. He had spent the longest in front of the various medicines, not really sure what to pick since neither him or Will had ever gotten sick enough to really need it. Plus medicine like this was expensive and he couldn’t really justify buying it for himself but Steve seemed pretty bad and he was armed with more cash than he had ever had for groceries. So he bought a couple packs of children’s medicine

since he thought the dosage might be better if Steve was sensitive to drugs? He hustled into the shortest line at checkout and as his luck would have it, his mom was working checkout.

“Jonathan?” She was surprised to see him at the store and even more so to see how full his cart was, “What’s all of this?”

“Um,” he knew that there was nothing to be embarrassed about but for some reason he didn’t know what to tell his mom, “I had to run an errand for Steve.”

“That Harrington boy?” She asked as she started ringing him up, “Is he bullying you Jonathan? Because if he is I swear to god...”

“No mom!” He broke in before she could get worked up, “It’s not like that at all. We’re friends actually.”

“Oh!” Her eyes went comically wide at that and he couldn’t say he could blame her when they had been getting into fistfights just a couple months ago. Her eyes narrowed again as if she didn’t quite believe him, “Then why is he making you do his grocery shopping?”

“He’s not mom.” He groaned pushing his hair out of his face, wishing that it were easier to just tell her, it wasn’t like he was doing anything wrong, “He’s really sick and they didn’t have anything in the house. And he’s all by himself all of the time and there’s no one to take care of him!” He let it all out in one long stream hoping that she would just understand. He could see the dots connecting in her mind as she continued to ring his things up.

“So you and Nancy are taking care of him since there’s no one there?” She asked slowly, somehow already knowing that Nancy would be there.

“Yeah,” he said, relieved that his mom understood him so well and he didn’t have to explain it more. “Actually, could you pick up Will up today from the Wheeler’s? If it’s all right I want to stay with him. He’s all by himself and he has no idea how to take care of himself and it’s not like Nancy could stay there with him and I’m just worried.” He realized that he was rambling and shut his mouth as quickly as he could. His mom had a keen look in her eyes like she

knew more about everything than Jonathan himself knew about it.

“Of course you can Jonathan, you’ve always been so responsible looking out for everyone else.” She gave him a proud smile, “You are so good at taking care of everyone. As long as you don’t skip school tomorrow you can stay over. And if anything happens call me right away! You can even call at the store if I’m not home yet and I’ll come right away, okay?”

“Yeah, thanks mom.” He smiled as he picked up the groceries and quick leaned in to kiss her on the cheek before he hurried off back to Steve’s house. He thankfully didn’t meet with any disasters on his way back and he was back in the house sooner before he had expected to be. He snuck upstairs and cracked open the door to Steve’s bedroom to make sure no one had died while he had been gone. Steve had fallen into a restless sleep and Nancy was sitting at his desk working on her homework. She heard the door crack open and she turned to grin at him. She came over to the door.

“Hey how’d it go?” She asked closing the door behind her so they wouldn’t wake Steve up.

“Good, I actually ran into my mom and she said I could stay over so he doesn’t have to be by himself.” Jonathan said.

“I could stay too!” Nancy said pouting at the prospect of being left out.

“Sure you could,” Jonathan rolled his eyes at her, “your mom would totally be one hundred percent okay with that.” She pursed her lips at that but she knew he was right.

“Fine, can I at least help you with the food?” Nancy asked peering around him like he had brought the food up there.

“Can you cook?” He raised one eyebrow at her.

“Well no...” She hesitated.

“Then you probably shouldn’t help this time,” he could tell that she was about to argue, “why don’t you stay up here with Steve and finish your homework? That way we don’t have to leave him

alone and I can look at your answers for the classes we share?”

“Fine, “ she agreed knowing that Steve would be upset if he woke up by himself, “but let me know if I can do anything else.”

“Sure,” he nodded turning to go back downstairs, “let me know if he wakes up. He should take some medicine and we need to try and get him to drink something. He’s probably really dehydrated.” She nodded that she understood and gave him a quick hug before she headed back into the bedroom. He was pretty sure that he was blushing but who could blame him? Plus there was no one here to see him so he could blush if he wanted to! He headed downstairs to start concocting some soup that would hopefully be palatable. It was all strangely domestic and if it weren’t for the fact that Steve was sick Jonathan would have probably enjoyed it. He immediately felt bad for thinking like that but he couldn’t really help it.

Notes for the Chapter:

This part ended up being way longer than I thought it would be so I broke it up into three parts. It let me take a deeper look into Steve's home life and stuff like that. I hope y'all are enjoying this so far! I always love hearing from people so feel free to say something! I'll continue this story until after they get together(at least 12 chapters total), after that I'll do some one shots and other longer stories so make sure to subscribe to the series if you want to make sure that you catch those! Hope you're all having a great weekend!

7. Chapter 7

Summary for the Chapter:

Part 2! Still Jonathan's pov

Notes for the Chapter:

Be warned there is some fluff ahead, be warned for cuddling under a million blankets and forehead kisses!

The Harrington's did thankfully have a soup pot big enough to fit the chicken in, even though it looked like it had never been used before like everything else in the kitchen. And with that they were well on their way to having something that was actually good to eat. He carefully chopped vegetables and threw them in to simmer. His mom had showed him how to make it once when he was little and he had been making it for her and Will ever since. He loved his mom and she tried her best but she was really an awful cook, he'd never tell her though. She tried so hard at everything that he would never tell her she was doing a bad job. She was already doing the best that she could. He would eat a million sad casseroles and failed cakes before he would ever dare complain about it. He had been about to go back up stairs and check on them again when Nancy appeared in the doorway.

"Steve woke up," she said with a grimace, "I think his fever went up again. He's really out of it, I'm kind of worried."

"Shit," Jonathan swore, "let's take his temperature again and then we'll try and some liquids in him. If his fever goes up anymore he should probably go to the hospital." Nancy watched him gather up various supplies and generally putter around.

"It's kind of nice to see you like this." She said thoughtfully.

"Like what?" Jonathan asked distractedly.

"Like this," she just vaguely gestured to all of him, "you know

in big brother mode.” She blushed a little at calling it that, “You know that’s not what I mean, I’ve just only seen you be this way about Will and your mom. It’s kind of nice seeing you act this way about Steve. It means you care about us.” She grinned at him obviously enjoying how embarrassed he was at being caught in the act of caring.

“Come on,” he said gruffly, “lets go make sure he’s okay.” She grinned at him again and grabbed half of the stuff out of his hands. Nancy went in first, opening the door quietly and peaking around to make sure Steve was still awake.

“Morning sunshine,” she cooed softly sitting next to the lump under the comforter, “Jonathan’s here and he’s going to make sure you don’t die on us.”

“Just let me die.” Came the muffled response from under the sheets.

“You’d better come out or I’m going to take all of your sheets.” Nancy threatened.

“You wouldn’t dare!” Steve peaked suspiciously over the edge of the blankets.

“Well a good way to find out it to keep being a pain!” Nancy stood up as if to start tugging and Steve reluctantly extricated himself from the sheets. Jonathan rolled his eyes at their antics but thought that at least Steve’s fever had probably stopped climbing if he could be this petulant.

“Come on,” Jonathan said taping the thermometer against his mouth, “we need to take your temperature.”

“Don’t want to.” Steve said petulantly but his mouth opened to talk and Jonathan popped the thermometer in. Steve obediently left the thermometer in thankfully and so Jonathan set about fussing, fluffing pillows and straightening the covers. He took Steve’s hand, who tried to shake him off but stopped when Jonathan glared at him. He gently pinched the skin on the back of his hand to see how bad his dehydration was. A nurse at the hospital had shown him how

when they had needed to go back to the hospital with Will because somehow he wasn't getting enough liquids. She said it was an easy way they could check to fix it before it got too bad. The skin smoothed back down pretty quickly so they shouldn't need to go to the hospital unless he couldn't keep any liquids down. Then he took the thermometer and checked it, it was still way too high but it hadn't gone up anymore so they should be fine, everyone would be fine. He poured some of the liquid children's medicine he had gotten out for Steve; he hoped that he would be able to keep it down.

"All right, drink up." He held it out for the other boy who turned his nose up.

"Steve come on," Nancy pleaded, "your fever is way too high, you need to take it."

"I don't want to," he pouted, "you can't make me." Jonathan turned his back to hide his frustration at Steve's antics; he was acting like a little kid.

"Steve," he said sternly, if he was going to act like a child then he was going to treat him like a child, "you are going to take your medicine and you need to drink something or else we are going to take you to the hospital and I don't care how much you don't want to go but you're not giving us any other options!"

"I'm sorry." Steve sounded way to upset for such a gentle scolding, "Don't be mad at me!" Jonathan turned around shocked, he didn't think he had even sounded mad but Steve seemed really upset by it, Nancy looked just as shocked as he did.

"I'm not mad at you Steve," he tried to catch his eyes but Steve refused to look up, "I'm just worried about you buddy, we're not going anywhere. Now come on, be good and take your medicine." Steve threw it back faster than was probably advisable but he didn't seem like he was going to throw it up so he couldn't complain. "Okay now drink this slowly," Steve made a face, "come on you need to drink something. You've been throwing up all day."

"But it tastes gross," he complained, "and it's for kids. I'm not a kid."

“Well you’re acting like a kid right now,” Nancy said with a hint of fondness reaching out and ruffling his limp locks, “so for now drink that up and if you’re good we’ll get you something that doesn’t taste like chalk.” Steve pursed his lips but slowly started to drink it, making faces at it but continued to dutifully sip it.

“Okay,” Jonathan got up to go check on the soup, “if you can keep that down for a half hour you can have something to eat.” Steve made a face that said he didn’t think that was a good idea but he had to actually eat if he was going to get better. He actually reminded Jonathan of Will when he was sick. Acting much more childish than he usually did and then feeling embarrassed about being needy, claiming that he didn’t need any help in the moments when he was feeling better. He chuckled quietly at the petulant face he had made at being made to drink the kids drink, it was kind of funny now. He finished up the soup and started putting together a tray when Nancy called for him.

“What’s wrong?” He asked frantically as he opened the door.

“I don’t know!” Nancy almost wailed, “He was fine one moment and then he started shaking like crazy and he got so much paler!” Jonathan breathed a sigh of relief at her statement, it was probably just his fever going down, it was probably fine.

“Your family doesn’t get the flu very often do they?” Jonathan asked as he walked over to make sure everything was alright.

“Not really, we mostly have allergies and colds, things like that?” She answered, seeming confused about how that was relevant.

“Well when a fever is changing, either going up or coming down, that’s when you feel the worst,” he couldn’t feel the radiating heat that Steve had before so he was probably right but he didn’t want to try and stick the thermometer in between his chattering teeth to check, “so his fever is coming down from the medicine so he feels like crap.” He wiped off his forehead with the now lukewarm washcloth; Steve had soaked through his ratty sweater, they’d need to change that. He was about to ask Steve if he thought he could sit up and help them so they could change it when Steve jerked up in

bed and tried to get up but he wasn't fast enough and threw up in the bed. He just kind of stared down at himself, sadly, like he didn't know what to do, and he was embarrassed.

"Hey Nancy," Jonathan turned to her taking her attention from the mess on the bed, "why don't you get the couch made up? You know where blankets and pillows are right? We'll take care of this up here."

"Yeah sure." She hurried off to get the couch ready.

"Sorry." Steve muttered, he still hadn't moved from where he was on the bed but he was shivering again.

"What are you sorry for?" Jonathan asked, slightly confused as he dug through his drawers looking for clean clothes.

"I'm sorry for making a mess of everything," he said so quietly that Jonathan could barely hear, "Sorry for being so much trouble. You two are probably going to hate me for this aren't you?"

"What?" Jonathan asked, confused about where these lines of thought kept coming from, "No we won't! We're just worried about you. You can't help it your sick." But Steve kept murmuring about how he was sorry and he didn't mean to and how he'd clean it up. "Now stop that, it's fine." He crouched down in front of Steve so he was finally forced to make eye contact, "we'll get this all cleaned up and we'll get you cleaned up and then we'll go downstairs, it's fine. Okay?" Steve gave a weak nod and with that Jonathan decided they could get going. He helped Steve up, in the process getting sick all over himself; which caused Steve to apologize all over again to which Jonathan told him to shut up because it was fine. They made it to the bathroom before he was sick again and this time they made it to the toilet. Jonathan rubbed his back through it like his mom always did, even now if she was there. When he was done Jonathan gave him his toothbrush and went to grab the spare clothes out of Steve's room and get a shirt for himself.

"All right," he said returning, "arms up."

"What?" Steve squawked, "I can change by myself!"

“Do you want to get throw up in your hair?” Steve shook his head no, “Then arms up.” He reluctantly complied and Jonathan went to work removing the soiled garment. By the time Steve was freed he had a faint blush across his cheek bones that Jonathan was pretty sure was not from his fever but he didn’t really know, maybe it was just wishful thinking. He threw him a clean shirt; he could get dressed by himself. It’s not like Jonathan was trying to go out of his way to make him uncomfortable. He turned around stripping off his own shirt and throwing it into the wash pile before pulling on one of Steve’s. It was weird; it was tighter than his own shirts were but the sleeves were too long, well it’s not like he didn’t know Steve was a lanky bastard. He turned around to see Steve gaping at him with his shirt only half way on, with what was definitely a blush going all the way down on to his chest. Huh, interesting.

“Need some help over there?” He asked smirking at Steve’s gob smacked expression.

“No!” He squeaked and hurriedly pulled his shirt on the rest of the way. Jonathan suppressed a chuckle as he went back into Steve’s room to strip the sheets and throw the window open so it didn’t smell like barf and sickness before he went back to fetch Steve from the bathroom. Going down the stairs was easier than getting him up them had been. Jonathan was hopeful that his fever had continued to go down and that the last time he had thrown up was just getting everything out of his system. His legs were a little bit shaky but he was mostly able to move under his own steam, only lightly leaning on Jonathan for balance instead of having to be dragged by him. Nancy had made a cozy nest on the couch and the two of them tucked Steve in, fluffing pillows and tucking quilts until they were fairly sure that he couldn’t actually escape from it. Nancy presented a big plastic bowl and put it next to the couch.

“Here, I got you a puke bowl,” she said hesitantly, “I don’t know if your family has a different one. I can go get it if you do but I thought it would be easier than you having to get up and try to get to the bathroom.”

“No we don’t have one, mom wouldn’t let me. She said it was too dirty.” He seemed hesitant to share this information, like they were going to use it against him somehow.

“Well then this one works perfectly!” Nancy said, “We’ll clean it up before she gets back and she’ll never know any better.” She nodded officially and left the bowl where she had put it. Steve looked bemused for a moment before he just accepted it and sunk down into the nest they had made for him. Jonathan followed Nancy out into the hallway.

“Do they have a washer here?” He asked, “I need to run a load so that he doesn’t have to sleep on the couch tonight.”

“It’s fine I’ll take care of it.” Nancy said turning towards the stairs.

“You don’t have to.” Jonathan said hesitantly. She turned back to him, putting her hands on her hips.

“I know you feel like you have to take care of everything Jonathan but this is something that I can actually take care of. You don’t have to run yourself ragged, I’m here too.” With that she rose up on her toes and pressed a kiss on his cheek before she spun around and headed up the stairs, “Go make sure he’s comfy, I’ve got this!” Jonathan reached up and touched his fingers against his cheek, well that was something that happened. In shock he robotically went into the kitchen and got a glass of ginger ale and a straw that he found when he looked in the back of a cabinet. He went back into the living room and flopped down on the couch next to Steve who had wrestled himself into an upright position.

“Your girlfriend just kissed me on the cheek.” Jonathan said, still not quite possessing what had happened.

“Damn she’s fast.” Steve mumbled, “I thought that we’d agreed to go slow.” Jonathan was about to ask for a clarification when Steve slumped into him and buried his face in Jonathan’s shoulder.

“What are you doing?” He asked not daring to move in case he broke whatever strange thing was happening with his two friends.

“I’m catching up.” Came his voice muffled by fabric. Jonathan freaked out internally for a few more minutes before

deciding that it didn't matter and relaxed into whatever this was. Eventually he poked the side of Steve's face with the straw until he turned his head and took a sip. They continued on like that in a comfortable silence until Nancy came around the corner and smirked at the two of them. If Steve didn't have a problem with Nancy kissing him on the cheek then maybe Nancy didn't have a problem with her boyfriend basically snuggling with him on the couch? He wasn't sure; he'd have to ask them about it later.

"Do you think you're ready to have some soup?" Nancy asked, coming over to press her hand to Steve's forehead to see how his fever was, "Jonathan made it for us, it smells really good!" Jonathan checked that he had actually drank the ginger ale and decided that they could chance it on the soup since it seemed like his stomach had accepted the drink. He got up and Nancy took his place snuggled up next to her boyfriend. The two of them were whispering but he decided that if they wanted him to know then they would tell him at full volume. He refilled the glass of ginger ale and grabbed a sleeve of saltines putting them on the low coffee table in front of the couch before going back into the kitchen to serve up two bowls of soup and delivering them to the people on the couch. They called out a chorus of thanks as Jonathan went back to get his own dinner. When he came back out he tried to exile himself to one of the armchairs but both of them complained profusely until he joined them on the couch. They were packed together with legs and shoulders touching, it was nice even if they had to use the excuse of Steve's illness, maybe they could do all of this when everyone was well but he didn't know if they would so he decided to selfishly enjoy it as much as he could.

"Oh my god Jonathan!" Nancy exclaimed after the first bite, "I had no idea you could cook like this!" Steve mumbled an agreement and tried to shovel more soup into his mouth.

"Hey," Jonathan poked him with a toe, "slow down or you're going to make yourself sick again. There's plenty to eat later if you're still hungry." Steve slowed down reluctantly but slowed down nonetheless. Both of them continued to excessively praise his soup until their spoons scraped against the empty bottom of their bowls. He had blushed bashfully about it the whole time. He and Nancy

cleared away the dishes and then cleaned the kitchen since apparently Steve's mom liked to keep things really neat.

"When do you need to head home?" Jonathan asked as he handed the last dish over to Nancy to dry.

"I can stay for another hour or two," she said, "I called my mom to let her know while I was working on the laundry."

"You want to watch a movie and then I can drive you back after?" He asked wiping his hands off on the apron that Nancy had found and laughed gleefully when he'd put on the frilly thing.

"Sure," she agreed smiling, "I bet they have some kid's movies, you have to watch a kids movie when you're sick!" It was kind of cute learning all of the things that Nancy's family did when someone was sick, he liked getting to know everything about them, even the not so pretty parts of their lives. Nancy set the movie up since Jonathan was still kind of confused about how the complicated set up worked. He tried to go sit in one of the armchairs again but Steve made grabby hands at him and he just couldn't say no to him. Nancy snuggled into the other side of Steve as the movie started.

"The Aristocats, seriously?" Jonathan asked raising his eyebrow with disbelief.

"Shut up," Steve said smacking him without looking away from the screen, "it's my favorite." Nancy laughed at both of them and everything was just right. About half way through the movie Steve started shivering violently, his teeth chattering and shaking so hard that he was jostling the other two on the couch. Nancy and Jonathan made eye contact over her head and silently agreed on a plan of action. Nancy grabbed another quilt off of the back of the couch and draped it over the three of them as both she and Jonathan burrowed their way into Steve's blanket nest.

"Guys don't," he argued unconvincingly through his chattering teeth, "you're both going to get sick!"

"If we've caught it it's too late and we already have it." Jonathan argued as he wiggled under the mountain of blankets and

snuggling closer.

“Yeah!” Nancy added as she snuggled in on the other side, “So shut up and accept our body heat!” Steve grumbled for a few more minutes before he accepted their snuggles and settled down. Eventually the tremors stopped and before the movie ended he fell asleep between the two of them. When the movie finished Nancy jumped up to turn it off before the tape could finish and wake up Steve. Jonathan carefully extricated himself from their tangled limbs and did his best to get Steve horizontal and tucked in snugly.

“All right, I’m all ready to go.” Nancy said as she slipped into her jacket.

“Wait a minute!” Jonathan went back looking for a scrap of paper and a pen, scribbling down a message to leave on the coffee table before they left.

“What was that about?” Nancy asked as they pulled away from the curb.

“I wanted to leave him a note so he knew I was coming back and we weren’t just leaving him while he was asleep.”

“Awe, that’s sweet!” Nancy cooed, Jonathan just shrugged his shoulders embarrassedly. They pulled up in front of Nancy’s house and just sat there for a moment. “Thanks for everything and for driving me home.” She said before leaning over the center console to press another kiss to his cheek. He couldn’t help it as he raised his hand up to touch it.

“So is this a thing we’re doing now?” He asked carefully, Nancy responded with a bright smile and a nod. “And Steve is okay with it? And not just because he’s probably a little strung out on children’s medicine?”

“Yeah Steve’s totally fine with it.” Her grin softened a little, “That is, as long as you’re fine with it?”

“I’m definitely fine with it.” Jonathan replied blushing heavily.

“Good!” Nancy beamed, “Then get ready!” And with that she dashed out of the car and into her house. Jonathan wasn’t 100% sure how he got back to Steve’s but there he was carefully easing his way back through the door that they’d left unlocked.

“Who’s there?” Steve’s sleepy voice called out sounding startled and suspicious.

“It’s just me!” Jonathan called out as he took off his shoes and hung his coat up by the door, “I just got back from dropping Nancy off.”

“Oh,” Jonathan rounded the corner to find Steve looking very surprised about this, “I thought you’d all gone home.”

“I thought you might,” Jonathan said as he lightly flicked the side of his head as he walked by to pick up the note to stick in Steve’s face, “that’s why I left you a note.”

“Oh, I didn’t see it.” Steve smiled a little secret smile as he read the note, glad that they hadn’t left without saying goodbye.

“How about we try and get you back up to your own bed big guy?” Jonathan asked holding out a hand to help him up. Steve was looking a lot better than he had even a couple hours ago and probably could have made it by himself. He seemed like he was well enough to feel self-conscious about touching the other boy. Jonathan was about to take his hand back embarrassedly, apparently cuddly needy Steve was just a product of his fever and Jonathan tried not to feel too sad about it, when Steve reached out and took his hand. He didn’t need much help but he stayed grasping Jonathan’s hand as they made their way up the stairs and into Steve’s room. Jonathan poured him another dose of the kid’s medicine; he grimaced but threw it back in one gulp. Jonathan tucked him back into bed.

“I’m not really tired you know,” Steve grumped, “I’ve been sleeping all day.”

“Yeah, but you’re probably going to get sleepy again in a little bit,” Jonathan replied, “it takes a lot out of you being sick.” He reached up and brushed Steve’s hair back, checking his temperature

like they had been doing all day, but unlike all day Steve jerked away from the touch. Jonathan frowned at that but removed his hand since Steve obviously didn't want it there.

"Sorry, didn't mean to gross you out," Jonathan said leaning back, "Nancy said you said this was okay, but I guess she misunderstood." Steve gaped for a moment, his mouth opening and closing like a fish.

"You didn't gross me out!" Steve finally burst out, "What exactly did Nancy say?"

"We'll she didn't exactly say that this was fine," he brushed the hair back off of Steve's forehead, he went still at that, "but she implied that it was part of what was fine." Jonathan decided he would see where this would go; he scooted on to the edge of the bed and leaned closer to Steve. His eyes were blown wide and his breath was shallow but he didn't seem opposed to it or try to push Jonathan away so he pressed on. "She actually implied that this would be okay." Jonathan leaned in, Steve closed his eyes as in anticipation, it was tempting but he would wait until they had an actual conversation about it. Instead he brushed the hair away from Steve's forehead again and pressed a dry sweet kiss there. Steve's eyes flickered open, looking completely shell shocked.

"So," Jonathan whispered, afraid to break the quiet between them, "was she right? Is this okay?" Steve licked his lips not being able to find his voice for a moment.

"Yeah," his voice sounded thick, "yeah it's okay." They shared a small smile.

"Well I'm going to go sleep on the couch," Jonathan said getting up, "yell if you need anything okay?" Steve looked like he wanted to say something but he choked it back.

"Okay, goodnight." He said.

"Goodnight," Jonathan leaned down and kissed his forehead again, just because he could, "See you in the morning." He could hear Steve spluttering about it all the way down in the living room.

Jonathan couldn't help but let a happy little smile work its way on to his face as he drifted off to sleep. Maybe he could have everything he had hoped for after all.

Notes for the Chapter:

I hope you are still enjoying this! There will start to be some progress but also some set backs in the upcoming chapters so look forward to it! I always love hearing from you and I got the sweetest comment on the last chapter and it seriously made my day! Thank you all for reading and I hope your week is going well so far and continues to go well!

8. Chapter 8

Summary for the Chapter:

The last part of Steve being sick. This chapter is from Steve's pov.

Steve woke to sun streaming through his window and the sound of pots clanging in the kitchen. That was odd, his mom never cooked and she wasn't even going to be back until tonight. It all came back to him in a flash; the dream, the conversation with Nancy, how sick he'd gotten when he had gotten back home, it was a little hazy in the middle there but at some point Nancy and Jonathan had shown up on his door step. He had been really fucking embarrassing if he remembered correctly. Both of them had been so beautiful and kind to his gross sick needy self. It had been nice, he had to admit, being taken care of and not being forced to stay in this big empty house all by himself. He was pretty sure they had all cuddled on the couch together at some point? That might have just been a fever dream though, he wasn't sure. He was sure that Jonathan had kissed his forehead at least twice. He blushed at the memory and immediately blushed harder from embarrassment over being so excited by a forehead kiss. It was of course that moment that Jonathan came bustling into his room.

"Hey," he said, smiling a little, probably at Steve's bedhead, "how are you feeling?" Steve was struck by the sight of him moving around his room like he lived there and flushed at how appealing it was to see him in Steve's own clothes. The way his shirt pulled tight across Jonathan's chest while it bunched up around his wrists set Steve's heart aflutter in the same way it did when Nancy wore his clothes and they pooled around her, hanging off her slender form. Jonathan came over peering concernedly at Steve, probably due to his flushed face and the fact that he hadn't answered yet.

"Yeah, I'm feeling a lot better." Steve finally forced out. Jonathan didn't seem to believe it though. He put his big hand to Steve's forehead to quickly check his temperature, Steve had to do everything within his power not to lean into his broad palm and just leave his face there. Jonathan didn't seem satisfied with that and

made him open up to actually take his temperature.

“It’s gone down a lot.” He sounded pleasantly surprised, “It’s still not back to normal but it’s a lot better than it was. So you should probably still stay home today but if it goes down and stays down you should be able to come tomorrow.”

“Okay, thanks mom.” Steve said teasingly. Jonathan just rolled his eyes.

“Make sure to keep taking your medicine today so your fever doesn’t spike again,” Jonathan said as he got up and started collecting random papers and pieces of clothing from around the room, “I made some porridge so make sure to eat that and then there’s leftover soup in the fridge that you can heat up for lunch. Then I have work tonight but I’ll drop by and check up on you after school.

“No! You don’t need to do that.” Steve blurted out; he regretted it when he saw the hurt look on Jonathan’s face.

“Okay then,” Jonathan said, hiding his face back behind the mask that he wore sometimes, “then I guess I’ll see you when you get back to school.” He turned around to leave but Steve couldn’t let him misunderstand him.

“Wait! I didn’t mean it like that!” Steve called out urgently, “My parents are coming home tonight and they don’t like having anyone in the house. That’s why you can’t come over. I would really like if you would but they wouldn’t let you in even if you showed up.”

“Oh, okay.” He smiled that little smile he had when he was pleased but was trying to hide it. “I’m glad you won’t be here by yourself then.”

“Yeah.” Steve replied, not having the heart to wipe that smile off of his face by saying that he might as well be alone even when there were other people in the house. Jonathan came back and ruffled his hair now that he knew he wasn’t being dismissed.

“All right, feel free to call me or Nancy if you need anything.” Jonathan said, “Actually my mom also said you could call her if you needed something.”

“Really?” Steve asked surprised, pretty sure she must hate him after her son almost got arrested for getting in a fist fight with him, “Wow, that’s really nice of her.”

“Yeah, she’s pretty great.” Jonathan smiled that secret smile that he only had when he was talking about his family; it was cute how much he loved them. “Well then I guess I’ll see you Steve.”

“See you.” And with that he headed out. Steve could hear him move through the house as he gathered his things and left, the front door shutting with an audible click and Steve was alone again. He kind of wished that he had gotten another one of those forehead kisses before Jonathan had left for school. He hated how needy he was, how much he wished that they could have both stayed but of course they had school and they couldn’t miss that. He wrapped a blanket around his shoulders and made his way down to the kitchen. The house carried a silence so immense that it seemed loud after the cheery bustle of life that it had in it yesterday. Steve turned on the TV so the small noises he made wouldn’t seem so jarringly loud.

Jonathan had folded all of the blankets and stacked them neatly on the coffee table; Steve smiled at the prof that he had been there at all. Of course he would have to clean everything to his mother’s standards before they got back, maybe he would see if a couple of them smelled like Nancy and Jonathan and put them on his own bed but the rest would have to be cleaned and hidden away if he wanted to keep his parents happy. Steve sighed, he was already feeling like he should lie down again but he had to work through it to get the house back in shape. He didn’t really have an appetite but he’d promised Jonathan he would eat breakfast so he forced himself to do so.

It took most of the day but the house was back in order up to his mother’s standards. He was exhausted and his head was spinning. He hadn’t had time to eat lunch and he was pretty sure his fever had spiked again since he’d also forgotten to take the medicine. He hid the throw up bowl that Nancy had claimed under his bed in case he

needed it and after taking his medicine crawled under the covers he had piled on the bed. His head was swimming and he wished that Nancy or Jonathan were there to hold his hand or push back his sweaty hair and worry about him. But they weren't and he had to get use to it, this was the way it had always been after all, he couldn't let himself get use to their coddling because it could disappear just as quickly as it had appeared.

He must have fallen asleep because when he woke up it was dark outside. He looked out of the window and could see his parent's car outside in the driveway. He wondered how long they had been home but he wasn't surprised that they hadn't been in to check on him. That was normal after all. All of the sudden he heard his mother rap on the door.

"Steve," she said loudly, the noise grating against him, making his head pound and goose bumps break out all over his fever sensitive skin, "someone named Nancy is calling on the house phone for you!" She wrenched the door open when he didn't immediately answer. "You know I don't like you friends," she sneered at the word, "calling on the house phone."

"Sorry mom," he croaked out as he stumbled to his feet, "I'll tell her not to call it anymore."

"Are you sick?" His mother asked pulling farther away from him, it wasn't like she had even been close to start with.

"Yeah." He started to answer but she was already turning away.

"Well make sure to keep it to yourself." She went off down the hallway without looking back. He sighed, he should have known better than to expect her to fuss over him but he had at least hoped for a little bit of sympathy. He knew she had issues with it but sometimes he just wished that she could just be his mom without her looking at him like he was something dirty that she could catch. He stumbled down to the phone in the hallway and picked it up from where it was sitting on the table.

"Hello?" Steve said.

"Hi Steve, it's Nancy." She answered, he already knew that it was her but he thought it was cute that she did this every time she called.

"Hey Nance, I really like hearing from you but next time could you call on my line, my parents don't like me tying up the main one." He was so tired and really wanted to go back to bed but he wanted to hear her voice more.

"Yeah sure," she sounded so distant across the phone, he wished she was here, "I just called the main line in case you where sleeping. I didn't want to wake you up by calling your room if you were." He let out a little chuckle, sliding down the wall so he could sit and talk to her. He really was feeling bad again.

"Hey Steve are you okay?" Nancy asked sounding worried.

"Yeah I'm fine, why?" He asked.

"Well Jonathan said you where feeling better this morning but you don't sound so good now." He could practically hear her brow furrowing over the line.

"Well I was better this morning," he sighed, "but my fever has probably gone up again."

"Steve!" She said exasperatedly, "Then you should go back to bed!"

"I don't want to," he complained, "it's lonely." He could hear her sigh again, but this time it was softer and sympathetic. She chatted away about benign things that happened today until he started nodding off right there in the hallway.

"Now you really need to go lay down!" Nancy insisted, "I'll have Jonathan call you when he gets off of work so you won't have to be lonely for to long." It was obvious that she didn't really understand what it was like in Steve's house but she did her best to make him feel better regardless.

"Bye Nance, love you." He hung up and decided he had to eat something before he could retreat back into his room. He wasn't

really hungry but he knew that Jonathan would nag him if he knew that Steve hadn't eaten anything since breakfast. He went downstairs and opened the fridge but none of the food that Jonathan had left for him was there. He sighed and walked over to the garbage, sure enough the food sat there in the garbage. He wasn't really upset, he should have known that his mother cleaning out the fridge would be part of her cleaning ritual when she got home but that food was all still fresh. Some of it was even from today but he should have known that she wouldn't let food that someone else had made sit in her clean fridge. He grabbed a sleeve of saltines and a can of ginger ale that he had hidden behind the milk and headed back to his room. It was against her rules to eat outside of the kitchen or dining room but he was really feeling like shit now and all he wanted was to be back in his own space. He took some more of the medicine and went back to sleep. He had probably really over done it with the cleaning and it still hadn't been up to her standards.

He woke up groggy and disoriented to his phone ringing by his bed. He picked it up and held it to his ear but didn't say anything.

"Steve?" Jonathan sounded confused like he might have dialed the wrong number by mistake. Steve just let out a little hum, he felt really out of it maybe he'd taken a little bit too much of the medicine before he'd gone to sleep or maybe his fever was just messing with him, he couldn't tell.

"Are you okay?" He asked, "Nancy was really worried about you."

"My mom threw out your soup," Steve said sadly, "she threw it all out, I'm sorry."

"It's fine?" He sounded confused about why Steve sounded so upset.

"No it's not fine." He still sounded groggy even to his own ears, was he even really awake? "I wanted to have another bowl but she threw it out before I could have any."

"That's okay buddy, I'll just make it for you another time." He sounded soft, like he meant it, that was good, he was glad

Jonathan wasn't mad at him. "Steve are you sure you're all right?" His voice sounded pinched and worried but Steve couldn't bring himself to really reply, he just kind of hummed something that hopefully sounded something like a yes. "Alright, it you say so. But if you're lying to me and you end up dying I'll drag your scrawny ghost ass back into this world just to get my revenge on you." Steve laughed sleepily at it and that seemed to reassure Jonathan that he wasn't going to keel over in his sleep.

"Hey Jonathan?"

"Yeah?"

"Can you stay on the line until I fall asleep?" He asked carefully, not sure if it was weird or not.

"Sure Steve, go to sleep."

Notes for the Chapter:

I hope you are all enjoying this! I always love hearing from you so feel free to leave comments, they really make my day and I can't stop grinning when you leave them! I hope you all have a wonderful week and if your Monday didn't start out so great I hope it only gets better from here!

9. Chapter 9

Summary for the Chapter:

Steve causes a misunderstanding and they have to try and fix it. From Nancy's pov.

"I think Steve's avoiding me." Jonathan said grumpily as he walked with Nancy from their shared English class.

"What?" She asked surprised that she hadn't noticed anything. She was usually the first one who noticed that something was going on, "Are you sure?" Jonathan was more sensitive about these kinds of things since he hadn't had very many friends before. Maybe he was just over reacting to something that wasn't actually a problem.

"Yeah I'm pretty damn sure Nancy!" He sounded angry for a moment before grimacing and shooting her an apologetic look. "If I'm not with you I never even see him!"

"What?" Nancy was shocked, up until now Steve had gone and walked with just Jonathan for at least half of the time that all three of them weren't walking together. He was also usually waiting by Jonathan's locker in the morning since Nancy didn't get to school as early since her mom dropped Mike off first.

"And whenever we are all together," Jonathan continued, "he makes sure that you are between the two of us. If you move so that we would be next to each other, then he will get up and move so that you are back in between the two of us!"

"That can't be right!" Nancy exclaimed. She was sure that if something was going on that she would have noticed it, she was good at noticing things after all! They spotted Steve up ahead, loitering by the water fountains, clearly waiting for them.

"Just watch." Jonathan murmured to her as they approached

him. "Hey Steve!" He called out uncharacteristically direct. Steve's eyes lighted on him for a moment before noticeably jerking away and focusing on Nancy.

"Hey guys!" He said apparently cheerfully but he had an uncharacteristic tension in his shoulders and although he had greeted both of them his eyes had stayed on Nancy ever since the unintentional eye contact when Jonathan had called out to him.

"Hi Steve." She tried to appear oblivious of the strain as she stretched up to press a light kiss on Steve's mouth. The three of them headed off towards the photography room for lunch but Nancy intentionally put Jonathan in the middle. Almost immediately, Steve dropped back to pretend to tie his shoe before reappearing to put an arm over Nancy's shoulder. Jonathan shot her a look that clearly said, "I fucking told you so!" Nancy watched carefully for the rest of the day. Observing how Steve wouldn't directly look at Jonathan or respond to anything he said directly. She could tell that it was upsetting Jonathan. He slowly started talking less and less the way that he did when he was with strangers or people he didn't like. He had put on that blank mask of an expression that he almost never wore around them anymore. She absolutely hated that! He should never have to pretend like that with them but here they were, with Steve making him feel like an outsider.

Something was wrong with Steve too though. His shoulders were constantly up around his ears and his usual loose stride was tight and stiff. He had been pale and a little skinny when he had come back to school from being sick and she had thought that the color would return and he would fill back out after a few days of not throwing up everything he put in his body but his coloring was still a bit off and he seemed to pick at his food when they ate together. Even her mom's meatloaf when he had come over for dinner! He loves her meatloaf! He had also stopped trying to get them to do things together like he always had in the past. Where before he tried to avoid being alone at any cost and now it was like he was trying to isolate himself. She couldn't bear to see them like this. She'd already talked to Jonathan and he was convinced that Steve hadn't really wanted them there at his house when he was sick. That Jonathan had somehow overstepped some boundary and now Steve hated him so

much that couldn't even stand to look at him. Nancy tried to tell him that that wasn't the case but he had just shook his head and pressed his lips into a determined little line. She wanted to tell Jonathan everything but it wasn't her place to tell and if this was going to work she couldn't be the one doing all of the work.

"Jonathan thinks you hate him." Nancy said conversationally one day when they were driving around in Steve's car. They had just pulled off to a place where they usually made out but Nancy was going to insist that they worked this out before there was any sort of kissing.

"What? Why would he think that?" Steve seemed genuinely shocked, his eyes had gone big and wide and his mouth hung open stupidly, like he really had no idea why Jonathan would think that.

"Well I can't blame him for thinking that," she inspected her nails like this really didn't concern her, "the way you haven't talked to him all week or even looked in his direction. Really you're treating him like he doesn't exist or worse you're treating him like a leper since you won't even stand near him. Using me as a flesh shield so you don't have to come in contact with him. If I were him I wouldn't be able to think of any other reason why I was being treated that way besides you suddenly hating me. He's convinced that he did something wrong, that he touched you too much and you didn't actually want him to. That you were too sick to get him to stop or too strung out on children's medicine and he went too far and now you hate him."

"I don't hate him!" Steve broke in looking frankly terrified.

"Well then you need to tell him that!" Nancy said exasperated, throwing her hands up. "He seriously thinks you hate him Steve! He doesn't think we want him around anymore! Haven't you noticed that he goes and develops pictures during lunch instead of sitting with us, or where you too busy ignoring him to notice? I don't know what's going on in that head of yours but I'm guessing your goal isn't to drive him away because that's what you're doing!" Steve looked like he had gotten the wind knocked out of him. He had started chewing on his lips; he only did that when he was really worked up. She took both of his hands in her own, trying to lend him

whatever sort of comfort she could. Sure she was a little mad at him for causing this mess but he was obviously just as worked up as Jonathan was.

“I just got scared.” He whispered.

“About what?” She tried to gently prod him along.

“I got scared about how much I wanted the both of you. How much I missed you both after you had left and I was there by myself. After you left he kissed me on my forehead, did I tell you that?” He asked glancing over at Nancy who shook her head no, he hadn’t told her, “Well he did but when he was leaning in I thought he was going to kiss me for real. You know like on the lips. And that scared me too, how much I wanted him to. It scared me about how much I care about you both and how much you both care about me. And I don’t think I’ve ever had anything like that before. And it scares me how I can’t stand the thought of losing either one of you. All I could think about was how if I acted on any of the things I want that I would mess it all up and instead of being with both of you I would somehow lose everything we had together. Those thoughts just got stuck in my head and I couldn’t get them to stop. The only way I thought I could save it all was to try and put things back to the way they were. That way nothing would change and I couldn’t get hurt by you both leaving.” He was breathing a little hard by the end of it but he looked like he had let a huge weight off of his shoulders. For the first time all week his shoulders weren’t hunched around his ears.

“But Steve,” Nancy said kindly, “you know that’s not what’s going to happen if we tell him? Why would he have kissed you on the forehead and cuddled with us on the couch and everything else we’ve done together unless he was alright with this? The only thing that is going to ruin everything is if you keep pushing him away like this. I understand that this is scary for you and I get that I will never actually understand how scary this is for you but I’m here for you and I want you to be happy. You’re happy when you’re with both of us right?”

“Yeah,” he said smiling at her like she hung the stars in the sky, “I’m the happiest I’ve ever been when I’m with both of you.”

"Then we need to tell him all of that together or we're going to lose him forever!" Nancy said looking him in the eyes, "We have to tell him Steve."

"Okay Nance," he sighed, accepting that it was the only way to go about this, "we'll tell him."

"Great," she said squeezing his hands, "then lets go tell him now!"

"What?" Steve practically screeched, "No way! I'm not ready! Can't we tell him tomorrow?" He asked desperately.

"No, we have to tell him today," Nancy said firmly, "if we wait you're going to freak out about it and it's not going to happen. If we wait I might freak out and it won't happen! So we're doing it today no matter what! Before we can lose our nerves." Steve looked shocked like he could have never imagined that Nancy would be worried about any of this. Of course she was! She loved them both so much but this was so far outside anything that she could have dreamed about in even her wildest dreams. Even in her craziest dreams it had just involved not settling down in the suburbs, or maybe not marrying the person she was living with. She had never thought that she would want to be in a relationship with two such amazing people. Nancy thought she was going to have to do more to convince Steve, but then a huge grin that had been missing lately lit up his face.

"Alright! Let's do this!" He turned the car back on, "A kiss for good luck?" He asked batting his eyelashes at her. She rolled her eyes but planted a big kiss on his cheek.

"One for me too?" Nancy asked grinning excitedly back at Steve, they where finally going to do this! He returned her kiss enthusiastically and they where off, back down the road they had come from. As they drove back past Steve's house to the Byers household the anxiety started to build in the car. Nancy reached out blindly for Steve's hand and squeezing it tightly when she found it, he squeezed back just as hard. They were going to do this and Nancy was 98% sure that he would say yes and mean it but she was still panicked over the remaining 2%. If she was this worried she could

only imagine how Steve was feeling, he had so much more to lose by admitting this. But when she glanced over he looked strangely calm. He raised her hand to his lips and pressed a gentle kiss there without taking his eyes off the road.

“Nancy Wheeler,” he said grinning, “the most beautiful girl in the world, we are about to do something absolutely crazy and if it works out we will be the luckiest people in the whole world with the best boyfriend anyone has ever had.” Steve’s sentiment was contagious and she found herself grinning along with him and the anxiety dissipated. He was right they could do this.

“Well I don’t know,” she teased him, “you’re a pretty good boyfriend.”

“Thanks Nance but he has actual skills and those amazing hands, like oh my god,” He smirked at her, “He’ll have to settle for having the second best boyfriend in the world, and lucky you! You get both the best and second best boyfriends, you’re super lucky!”

Notes for the Chapter:

We are nearing the end here but don't worry there will be plenty of other stories in the series! So make sure to subscribe to the series if you want to get updated on new parts of their story! I hope you're all enjoying this so far and that you'll stick with me till the end! I love hearing from you, you are all so truly sweet and I adore each and every one of you ^_^ Feel free to leave a comment, it always makes my day and leaves a smile on my face! I hope you have all had a good week so far and that your weekend will be even better!

10. Chapter 10

Summary for the Chapter:

Nancy and Steve show up at Jonathan's house and Joyce decides to give them a little space. Joyce's pov

Joyce had no idea what was going on, everyone had been out of sorts all week. First Will had had some sort of cold and they had had to go to the doctor for that. Then her car hadn't been working properly and Jonathan had needed to pick her up from work a couple times because the damn thing just wouldn't start. Then there had been whatever had been going on with Jonathan.

She had been so excited for Jonathan to have good friends that he worried about and took care of and it seemed like they cared for him too. They had been almost inseparable lately, going everywhere together, doing everything together. Joyce had a suspicion that it was more than just friendship but if he didn't want to tell her then she wasn't going to pry yet. He'd tell her when he was ready. She'd gotten that feeling when he had looked so panicked at the grocery store that day. How he'd tripped over his words as if he didn't have the right ones to talk about something that big. Her sweet boys, they had so many feelings and cared so much, but they were both absolutely garbage at expressing it in words. She had been sure that things had changed between Jonathan, Steve, and Nancy when he had come bursting in that morning after he had stayed at Steve's. He'd had the biggest smile on his face and even though he had seemed tired he had been bursting with energy. But then a few days later when Jonathan had come home after school he had seemed absolutely awful.

It was as if someone had burst the previous balloon of happiness inside of him. His shoulders had been hunched and he had kept his head down, a stark contrast to how happy and light he had been lately. She'd asked him if something had happened, if he was feeling alright, worried that he had caught whatever Steve or Will had, but he had just shrugged her off and told her it was nothing. All week he'd been like this, upset and anxious, refusing to tell her what was the matter. Instead of spending every minute as a trio as they

had been doing he came home right away after school or work and shut himself away in his room. When she had peeked in to check on him she had found him laying on his back with his headphones on and his eyes closed like she knew he did when he was upset about something. One night, Jonathan had just come back from work and Will was already in bed and she had sat him down and asked him again what was wrong, not taking “nothing” for an answer this time.

“I messed everything up mom.” He had said quietly tracing an old stain on the tabletop over and over again. She had tried to get him to tell her how or why he thought that but he just kept insisting that it was all his fault over and over again. That was all she had been able to get out of him about what had happened but she doubted that he had really messed everything up as badly as he claimed he had but she couldn’t do anything to convince him otherwise. So when Nancy and Steve showed up on her front porch looking just as miserable and anxious as her son had been looking for the past week, their linked hands clutching at the other’s as if it was a life line, but with a look of determination on their faces she had let them in right away.

“Jonathan’s in his bedroom down the hall.” She said pointing vaguely; they knew where his room was. “Will and I are going out to run some errands so we’ll be back later.” This seemed like a conversation that they needed to have on their own. After they had disappeared into his room she went and knocked on Will’s door.

“Come on baby, come with me to the library.” Joyce said sticking her head into her youngest son’s room.

“But I don’t need to go to the library,” he seemed confused at her sudden desire to leave the house on her day off, “can’t I stay here? Jonathan’s here so it’s fine right?”

“Well,” she said dropping her voice and coming into the room so she wouldn’t be over heard, “you know how Jonathan has been moping around all week? Well Nancy and Steve came over to work things out and I think it would be nice if we gave them some privacy for that.” She gave him a look that hopefully conveyed the message that she hadn’t said. Will was a smart boy; he probably had some sort of idea about what was going on. She could see the moment that it

clicked for him and his eyes went wide and he went to quickly gather up his things. They were out in the car, seat belts on, pulling out on to the road when Will spoke up.

“Do you think they’re finally going to get their act together and actually kiss each other?” Will asked earnestly, eyes bright and excited.

“I sure hope so kiddo.” She reached over to ruffle his hair; “It would sure make everyone a whole lot happier if they did.” Will was quiet for a moment, thinking something over as they drove into town.

“So it’s okay?” He asked hesitantly.

“Is what okay?” She asked glancing over at him.

“I don’t know, I guess everything?” He asked his brow furrowing, “That there’s three of them? That there’s another guy?” He had gotten quieter as he’d talked so the last question was barely whispered.

“Of course it is,” Joyce answered keeping her eyes on the road so he didn’t feel like he had to hide anything, “as long as they’re all happy with it and their being safe then there’s no reason why I shouldn’t be okay with it. They’re both good kids and they obviously like Jonathan so there’s no reason why I shouldn’t be fine with it.”

“Oh, okay.” Joyce chanced a glance over to see him smiling softly, yeah, there was no reason why this wouldn’t be okay with her as long as her kids happy.

Notes for the Chapter:

Sorry for how long it's been since the last update, I've been sort of out of it lately. I hope you've enjoyed this chapter and you won't have to wait quite so long for the next one (I will probably post the next chapter as a Christmas present as long as I'm able to get to my computer). We're almost to the end of this part of the story with only two more chapters left! There will be a bunch of one shots as well as several

longer multi chapter stories so if you want to be sure not to miss them be sure to subscribe to the series! As always you all write the sweetest comments and are just generally such darlings so thank you for that! I always love hearing from you and it always makes my day that much better. I hope all of you lovelies are having a great holiday season and if you're not I hope it gets better from here on out! <3

11. Chapter 11

Summary for the Chapter:

Two certain someones drop by unexpectedly.
Jonathan's pov

Jonathan had been lying on his bed listening to some sappy heartbreak song as had become his habit over the past week. He was pathetic; they'd never even been together in the first place so he had no right to feel this way. He had no right what so ever to feel like they had both broken up with him. This is what he got for expecting something good to come from his pathetic pining. He deserved it really, Jonathan had told himself not to act on those feelings. And what had he done? He'd gone and acted on them. He was such an idiot. He should have known that whatever Nancy had meant with her little cryptic speech had obviously not been what Jonathan had thought it was because if it were Steve would not have been treating him like this. He shouldn't have done anything he knew that. Yet he'd gone ahead and not only done something but he'd had expectations for future somethings. He really had been stupid. There was a knock on his door it was probably his mom.

She'd been trying so hard to get him to talk about what was bothering and had been trying to cheer him up. But how do you go ahead and tell your mom something like that? Like, "Yeah mom, you know those two people who are my only friends in the whole world? Well I went and fell in lover with them. Which one you ask? Well that's actually a funny story; it's actually both of them! Hilarious I know. Well they're both really nice people so I stupidly thought that they both liked me back! I know it's crazy but that's just how dumb I am. So then I went ahead and ruined the relationship I had with my only friends! How did I do that you ask? Well I went ahead and kissed the guy, well it was on the forehead, but that's obviously way out of line. Well now he hates me and he's perfectly right to do so because I shouldn't have done that! Now excuse me while I drop off the face of the earth!" See? He couldn't have that sort of conversation with her.

"Mom, I'm fine you don't need to..." He sat up and found not

his mother at his door but none other than Nancy and Steve. Standing there awkwardly in the doorway of his messy room, watching him mope for who knows how long. "Oh, hi." He finally managed to get out as he ripped his headphones off. Nancy gave an awkward little wave and Steve just sort of grimaced. They both looked so stiff and unnatural standing there. "Well you guys can come in if you want." He said finally scrambling off of the bed to hide as much of the mess as he could under the bed and in his closet. They shuffled in but they didn't say anything. All three of them just stood there avoiding eye contact with anyone else in the room. Finally Nancy grew tired of the stand off and went and shoved Steve forward.

"You started this mess so you have to at least try to clean it up!" She hissed which was probably only made for Steve to hear but Jonathan couldn't help but hear in the awkward silence that had descended on the room. Steve cleared his throat, rubbed the back of his neck, awkwardly shuffled his feet, examined the posters on Jonathan's walls, anything it seemed except for look at Jonathan or say whatever he had to say. Nancy gave him another shove forward and he stumbled until he was standing directly in front of Jonathan.

"Well Nancy said that you thought I hated you," he made eye contact with Jonathan briefly before his eyes flickered away again, "and I wanted you to know that I don't hate you at all, not even a little bit. And you didn't do anything wrong. So yeah." He trailed off, it was obvious that he had more to say but it wasn't exactly coming out.

"Oh yeah? Then why have you been avoiding me all week?" Jonathan asked, maybe a little bit more harshly than was necessary but he felt like he had at least a little bit of a right to be angry. He didn't deserve to be jerked around like that, they couldn't say one thing and do another. It just didn't work like that.

"Well, I don't hate you," his eye's flickered rapidly around the room, flitting from thing to thing, "um, it's actually the opposite. Uh, I really like you."

"You like me?" Jonathan asked, taken aback, "How on earth am I suppose to believe that when you've been treating me like I

have the plague all week? It's obvious that I over stepped some line when I was at your house and grossed you out. So sorry about that but you should have just told me that! I don't know why you keep lying to me like this; if you want me out just tell me! You don't need to keep lying to me to try and spare my feelings. I'm a big boy, I can handle your rejection!" He knew he was yelling but he couldn't stop everything was just bubbling out. He was pacing back and forth filled with some sort of frantic energy that had no outlet.

"Wait! Jonathan stop!" Steve grabbed his hands to force him to stop pacing and made eye contact. His eyes wide and frantic looking, trying desperately to get his point across, "I do! I like you so much, like a lot. Like it's probably like love like." Steve paused there flushing darkly while Jonathan stood there in shock, his mouth gaping like a fish, "I like you so much that I got scared. I was afraid of how much I like you and how much you mean to me. I got so stuck on that that I was terrified about what I would do if I lost you. I was scared to try and move forward but I knew that things were already changing. I was scared that if they changed any more that I would lose what we had. That I would lose everything. And I know I was stupid but the only way I could think about preventing that was to take things back to how they use to be and I don't know why but I thought treating you like I was would do that. I know it was dumb but I was really trying my best."

"Wait, so you were ignoring me because you like me?" Jonathan asked incredulously.

"Yes." Steve responded quietly, looking down at the carpet but still clasping hands with Jonathan.

"That is so fucking stupid Steve, how was that going to solve anything?" Jonathan asked but continued on before Steve could try and defend himself, "You're an idiot Steve Harrington." Steve looked like he was going to combust or at least flee but Jonathan kept a firm grip on his hands, "You're an idiot but I guess I'm an idiot since I like you a lot too."

"Wait! What?" Steve asked obviously not expecting that answer, "How can you like me back? You didn't show it at all!"

"I thought it was pretty obvious!" Jonathan defended himself; "At least I didn't ignore you like I was some stupid middle schooler!"

"I don't believe you." Steve said stubbornly, "You didn't show it at all."

"What was I supposed to do?" Jonathan asked, "Go around flirting with my two friends who are dating each other? Come on, what was I supposed to do? Plus, what do you think that kiss on the forehead was supposed to be? Do you think I just go around kissing people?" He had started flushing during his little speech and he had to let go of Steve's hands to hide his face in his hands. He wanted to crawl in a hole and hide after revealing that much.

"You said both of us right?" Nancy asked hopefully from the doorway, she hadn't come any closer throughout the entire conversation. It was like she was afraid that she was the one who was going to get rejected in this situation, which was entirely ridiculous.

"Of course both of you," Jonathan mumbled from behind his hands, "you're both so amazing, who wouldn't fall for both of you?" That seemed to be all that Nancy needed to unstick her feet from the floor and come to stand before Jonathan. She peeled one of his hands away from where he was hiding his face.

"Come on, there's no need to hide." She said gently, holding his hand in hers, but he closed his eyes, afraid of what could possibly happen. "It's fine because we... because we both really like you too." Nancy swallowed nervously and Jonathan dared to open his eyes. Nancy was bright red with embarrassment. "We really like you and we really want to date you," she seemed to be having a hard time getting it out but she carried on, "like all three of us at the same time, together. Is that okay?" Nancy looked up shyly through her lashes, an excited but nervous expression on her face.

How could she ever think for even a moment that he would say no? How could she think that he would reject what they wanted with him after he had bared his heart like that? He realized that he had been quiet for too long and everyone was looking at him with vague horror like they thought he was going to say that it wasn't okay and he wanted them to leave.

“Of course it’s alright!” Jonathan blurted out loudly. He couldn’t help but flush out of embarrassment from his response echoing out drastically too loud in the quiet space. Nancy looked like she was lit up from the inside she seemed so happy, a broad grin stretching across her small face. Jonathan couldn’t help but gather her up into a hug like he always wanted to, not careful and barely there like their hugs usually were but firm and strong, holding her close to his body without having to fear some kind of repercussion or awkwardness. She was so soft and so small like he had always imagined. Her hair smelled like some sort of fruit, possibly peach, and he couldn’t help but bury his nose in it. It was perfect, even the bony angles of her shoulders that dug in a little bit uncomfortably were perfect. They let him know that this was real and he wasn’t just making up an elaborate fantasy. He finally lifted his head up, just enough to peer over the top of her head and see Steve standing there frozen like a statue.

“Come on,” Jonathan said quietly, sounding loud in the silence, “get over here.” He opened one of his arms leaving the other one wrapped around Nancy who turned around slightly.

“Yeah Steve,” she said smiling, “get your ass over here or we’ll start to think that you don’t want in on this relationship!” That lit a fire under him, at first he stumbled but then his steps grew sure and he hurried into the hug squeezing both of them tightly.

“Hey!” Nancy squeaked from the middle of the hug, “Don’t squish me! I’m not as big as you two lugs!” Jonathan felt like his face might split in two with how happy he was and if a few tears of joy slipped out, well who was going to know?

“This is for real, isn’t it?” He asked after a minute, “This isn’t just an elaborate joke?” He should know that it wasn’t but he couldn’t stop the voice at the back of his mind that said that they were tricking him.

“Why would you think that?” Nancy asked sounding distressed as she peered up at him from where she was pressed against his chest.

“Well it’s just I would dream of something like this

happening,” he mumbled, “but I always told myself that this could never actually happen. I’m just worried that this isn’t really happen. That I’ll wake up and it will have just been another dream.”

“Well it’s not!” Nancy pursed her lips, thinking for a moment before she hauled his face down to her level. “Is this alright?” She asked rubbing her thumbs across his cheekbones. All the words had fled from his head at her soft touches so he just nodded mutely, hoping that that would be enough. She pressed her dry lips against his own, just the lightest of touches, so sweet and earnest that he knew that he had to be awake and there was no way this was a cruel joke. Nancy would never kiss someone to be mean to them. She pulled away, still holding on to his face, and they shared a small smile in the moment, both of their cheeks burning cherry bright, before Jonathan glanced up to look at Steve who looked in awe of the moment they had just shared.

“And you’re okay with this, like really okay with this?” Jonathan asked biting his lip. He could see Steve just going along with this for Nancy, that he would do anything to make her happy even if he didn’t really want to. Steve looked almost uncertain for a moment but a look steeled in his eyes and he replaced Nancy’s hands with his and he hauled Jonathan up to his level. He kissed him soundly with none of the tender finesse that Nancy had, but full of nerves. Like if he waited he might not follow through with it but it was also full of freedom and so much pure joy that Jonathan had to know that he meant it. They pulled apart panting and grinning and Jonathan decided that this was the second best day of his life after getting Will back safe and sound.

“I’m really very more than just okay with all of this.” Steve said grinning and looking more relaxed than he had since before he had entered Jonathan’s room. He leaned in and pressed another little kiss to Jonathan’s forehead, a perfect mirror of the one Jonathan had pressed on to Steve’s forehead last week. “You’re stuck with us so you’d better get use to it!” Eventually all three of them ended up lying on Jonathan’s bed, staring up at the ceiling and holding one another’s hands, when all of the sudden Jonathan jerked up in bed.

“Oh shit!” He hissed.

“What?” Nancy asked almost sleepily.

“Um, well,” Jonathan blustered, “we didn’t exactly have a quiet conversation about all of this...” He paused, taking a deep breath before burying his head in his hands, “Oh my god, my mom and Will heard everything.” Steve sat up as well and chuckled a little as he put a comforting hand on Jonathan’s knee.

“Nah, don’t worry about it man,” he said, “your mom took Will into town to run some errands.” Jonathan let out a sigh of relief, flopping back down on the mattress, his head bouncing next to Nancy’s. “I think she already knows though.” Steve said as he lay back down next to Jonathan laying his head on Jonathan’s shoulder, pressing little kisses into his neck. “Your mom’s pretty cool.” Jonathan responded by letting out a tortured groan, which his kind and loving girlfriend and boyfriend laughed at him for. Jerks, they were lucky that they were cute.

Notes for the Chapter:

Happy holidays everyone! I hope you enjoyed them finally getting together! There will be one more chapter in the story (it will involve kissing if that's an incentive for you) but if you want to know more about their relationship and how it progresses please feel free to subscribe to the series! Thank you so much to everyone who has read and enjoyed this little story so far! Thank you so much for supporting me! I always love hearing from you so please feel free to drop by and leave a comment! Hope that all of your holidays have been joyful and bright and that your future will be as well <3

12. Chapter 12

Summary for the Chapter:

Nancy gets fed up with the glacial pace her boyfriend is setting and decides to do something about it.

Notes for the Chapter:

Sorry for the long break everyone, it wasn't on purpose. I went back and reread the past chapters and found so many typos, I swear I've already proof read them multiple times :(so I'll be going back and fixing that -_-

Enjoy the last chapter of this part of the story!

Nancy was the happiest she had ever been in her entire life. She felt like her heart could just take flight and she might just float off into the clouds, she was that light from happiness. She had the two best boyfriends in the world and she couldn't be happier. Well, she probably could be happier but she didn't really feel like she had a right to complain about it. Well, she was going to anyway. The thing was, since the day they had gotten together things hadn't really progressed at all. They hadn't even kissed all that much since that day. Sure, they spent almost every waking moment together and Nancy loved every minute of it. She loved them all being together. But the lack of action was slowly killing her. She and Steve had decided not to keep having sex without Jonathan for now, it just didn't feel right and it felt like something was missing when he wasn't there. They had also planed to take it slow because Jonathan hadn't been in a relationship before and none of them had been in a relationship with more than one person before. Plus nether of the guys had been in a relationship with another boy before. So taking all of that into consideration all three of them had decided to take things as slowly as they needed to. And really, Nancy was fine with that, she understood that these things take time but it didn't change the fact that she was extremely frustrated about the whole thing. It was really taking a toll on her that she had two super hot boyfriends and she couldn't touch either of them! What on earth would past her have thought about this whole thing? Past her would have been extremely

shocked and possibly thought that she was being ridiculous about the whole thing but she couldn't help it.

She was more than ready to move things forward and even Jonathan seemed more than ready to get a move on. It was Steve who seemed to be putting the brakes on. He seemed fine with all of the little touches. They still acted like their usually couple selves at school since this relationship had to stay a complete secret, at least here in Indiana. And as much as Nancy liked to say that she didn't care and screw them, she really did care and she couldn't stand the thought of people looking at her the way she knew that they would. Then when they would all hang out together Steve seemed to be fine with the hand holding and doling out little forehead and cheek kisses and that was all very sweet and everything but Nancy wanted more! She knew that this was a big deal for him and she needed to be patient and not push him too hard but she also knew that if she didn't help him along he would stall out and that wasn't any better. Nancy knew she had to come up with something before he tried to back out entirely despite being the happiest he'd ever been.

They had all been cuddling on the couch together watching some stupid movie on TV that no one was actually watching. They were too distracted by their thighs touching each other and their bodies all smushed together in the too small space. Nancy was sandwiched in the middle and she knew that if she didn't do anything that they would just spend the night like this stuck in limbo. So she did something about it. She waited until a commercial came on and then she climbed onto Steve's lap. He looked a little bit surprised but he smiled up at her and put his hands on her waist as if she would slide off if he didn't. She put her hands gently along his jawline to tilt his head to just the right angle and brought their lips together. She felt him tense for a moment and she just knew that he had glanced over wide-eyed to see if Jonathan was watching but soon enough he relaxed into the kiss. This was safe and expected after all, this he knew how to do, they had been doing this for months. They kissed until it they grew lazy and open mouthed, Nancy gave his lip a couple of nips for good measure, she knew that he liked that, before she pulled away. He tried to chase her with his lips but she just laughed and pushed him back against the couch. She glanced over to see Jonathan watching with rapt attention, mouth hanging open

slightly, movie completely forgotten. Just the way she wanted it. She reached out to him and dragged him across the empty space in the middle of the couch until his body was pressed up against Steve. Nancy turned a little bit and without releasing the grip she had on his collar dragged him into a searing kiss. Kissing Jonathan was different from kissing Steve, it wasn't better or worse but it was new and a little exciting. He was a good kisser despite not having much practice with it. They had kissed a lot in other ways, little pecks on the lips, forehead and cheek kisses. They had only made out a couple of times before this but they had stopped almost as soon as they started. Nancy intended to remedy that tonight. They kissed hard and furiously and soon Jonathan had risen up on his knees and was supporting his body weight with a hand on the arm of the couch so he could have the leverage to kiss her like he wanted to. She let him take control of the kiss, making sure to give as good as she got. They bit and sucked at each others mouths and Nancy was pretty sure that both of their mouths were swollen by the time she pulled away, chasing it with a couple of smaller kisses before she pulled away entirely. His pupils were blown wide and he was breathing heavily, she glanced over at Steve and found him in much the same state. His hands were still around her waist where they gently flexed and released like he wasn't even completely conscious that he was doing it. His pupils were blown just as wide as Jonathan's and probably hers were and other parts of him certainly seemed interested.

"All right," Nancy purred, doing her best to sound confident, "now it your turn."

"Wait!" Steve reeled back. "You mean us?" He gestured between Jonathan and himself, "Like make out together?"

"No, she means me and the other person who's here." Jonathan said rolling his eyes, "Come on Steve of course she means the two of us." Steve bit his lip and looked so awfully unsure of himself.

"Steve, it's fine," Nancy tried to sooth, "just let go. I know you'll like it." Steve looked like he was about to protest that no he would not like it when Jonathan finally got fed up with it.

"I swear to god if you say you won't like it I will get up and

leave right now.” He glared at Steve showing that he was not messing around, “Steve, do you even really want to be here or are you just trying to make Nancy happy? Because sometimes I can’t tell if you really want to be here with all of us or if you just want a friend who also makes out with your girlfriend for some reason!”

“I do want to be here!” He took one hand off of Nancy’s waist to grab at Jonathan’s arm to make sure he couldn’t leave, “It just... It’s all just new to me and I feel like a fumbling preteen all over again! Like I’m going to go too far or do something wrong and chase you off.”

“That’s not going to happen as long as you are actually interested in this.” Jonathan said rolling his eyes more fondly this time.

“Oh he’s definitely interested in this.” Nancy said mischievously as she took the opportunity to grind down where she was still perched on his lap.

“Nancy!” He was embarrassed, how cute.

“Well as long as you’re interested,” Jonathan murmured grinning, “I guess we can make out.” Nancy crawled off of Steve’s lap, as much as she often liked being in the middle they sometimes forgot how big they both were and she was not quite in the mood to be squashed today, plus she wanted to have a good view. She nudged Jonathan a little and he got the picture and clambered up onto Steve’s lap where Nancy had been. Steve was practically glowing red with embarrassment and Jonathan glanced over to share a smirk with Nancy. They both enjoyed teasing their boyfriend; he was just so cute when he got all flustered. Jonathan leaned in, bracing himself on either side of Steve’s head, his forearms resting on the back of the couch.

“So are we going to do this or not?” Jonathan asked, trying to goad Steve into doing something.

It worked though because Steve surged forward and crashed there lips together, well, at least he tried to but he missed a little bit. Jonathan couldn’t help but laugh at that, and for a moment Nancy

was worried that Steve would pull away and sulk, but to her surprise he joined in laughing. Much more carefully this time, Steve took Jonathan's face in his hands and pressed their lips together both of them still laughing. The sight filled Nancy up with an abundance of love for them both. The sweet kissing interrupted by bouts of laughter slowly dissolved into something hotter and hungry with lots of hair pulling. They both had very pullable hair if Nancy did say so herself.

Now that she knew that this was actually going to work out between them all she might need to work herself back into all of the kissing that was going on!

Notes for the Chapter:

I'm so sorry it took me so long to post this! >_<
Seriously its been written for months, since before the last chapter came out. I just was putting off editing it and then I completely forgot that I hadn't. Plus I kind of lost my steam in life and haven't done any writing in ages. But I'm back now! I have so much more to write for these lovelies! If you want to stay up to date be sure to subscribe to the series. I love all of you and I hope you lovelies have enjoyed this story so far!

Author's Note:

I'm doing this as my reward for finishing my writing for NaNoWriMo so it may not be consistent at all. Plus with Thanksgiving coming up I don't know how much writing I'll get to do but I have so many ideas for these three so I'll do my best!
As always I love hearing from you! Hope you all have a wonderful week!